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Volume 3, Issue 3 THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026 wilcoxnewspapers.com

Lifeguards rescue Mayor Brown's husband

By James Windell

When the lifeguard program returned to South Haven's South Beach during the Memorial Day weekend, no one had any idea how quickly a trained lifeguard program would pay off.

On June 9, 2026, Jeff Filbrandt came out of Lake Michigan on South Beach after swimming laps in preparation for an ironman competition. He spotted a lifeguard on the beach and walked over to him to chat.

What happened next was contained in a press release from the City of South Haven: "A swimmer exited the water and was speaking with on-duty lifeguards when the individual suddenly became unresponsive. The lifeguard team immediately assessed the individual, initiated PR and deployed an Automated External Defibrillator to revive the swimmer."

But that tells only a small part of the story.

Jeff Filbrandt, who has been the owner of Filbrandt Family Funeral Home and is a member of Kiwanis, is also the husband of South Haven Mayor Annie Brown. She fills in the details of what happened on the beach:

"Jeff biked 54 miles the day before he collapsed at South Beach after swimming laps," Mayor Brown says. "An angiogram showed that he had 100 percent blockage in two places. What he had at the beach was a cardiac arrest."

Brown went on to say that Jeff's doctors and nurses have told him how lucky he was. "They said he is alive specifically because our highly-trained lifeguards immediately performed CPR and then shocked him with a defibrillator to get his heart started. An ambulance was able to take him right to Corewell Hospital. Our family is extremely grateful for our highly qualified lifeguards, SHAES, paramedics and the police."

Bringing back a lifeguard program, which the city had not had for 25 years, was controversial, but the South Haven City Council approved a return of lifeguards to South Beach in November, 2025. Mayor Brown was in favor of a lifeguard program throughout city council discussions.

Prior to newly hired lifeguards beginning to patrol South Beach Memorial Day weekend, the eight lifeguards received extensive training. That was evident in saving the life of Filbrandt.

"Thanks to the quick actions of our lifeguards and strong coordination with South Haven Area Emergency Services, the South Haven Police Department and our Beach Enforcement Attendants, this was a well-executed response at every level," says David Figurerdo, Chief Lifeguard. "Our team is trained to act immediately, and in this case, that rapid intervention made a critical difference. The reinstated lifeguard program serves as an additional layer of safety on South Beach, complementing the other measures already in place, with staff actively watching the water and ready to respond at a moment's notice. We're grateful for the teamwork across departments that helps keep our beachgoers safe."

Figureredo points out that his lifeguards are trained not only to recognize signs of distress but also how to administer high-quality CPR and use an Automated External Defibrillator. "Early, effective CPR and AED use are critical components of the cardiac chain of survival, greatly increasing the likelihood of a favorable medical outcome in a cardiac event," he notes.

No matter, Filbrandt is grateful for the lifeguards who reacted so quickly after his cardiac arrest.

"I'm thankful that I was in the right place when I passed out," he says as he recovers. "The ER doctor said I should go buy a lottery ticket. I got great care from the team of lifeguards on the beach. I think a lot can be said for living in a small community – you get a lot of personal attention. Lifeguards, EMTs and the police all rallied together to help me and I'm on the road to recovery."

Mayor Brown, though, has the final word: "I was in favor of lifeguards," she says. "But more importantly our city council agreed to bring back the lifeguard program. Regardless of how people felt about lifeguards, today we're all saying: Thank God for lifeguards."

Police officers, lifeguards receive awards

James Windell

South Haven Police Chief Adam DeBoer honored two police officers and three lifeguards with awards at the South Haven City Council meeting on Monday, June 15, 2026.

Calling Detective Knizewiski and Officer Haner to the podium, Chief DeBoer said he had the honor of presenting the police department's Professional Excellence Award.

"The Professional Excellence Award shall be granted to any member of the South Haven Police Department for an outstanding act, act which brings credit to the department and involves performance above and beyond that required by a member's basic responsibility, or which the award review board wishes to formally recognize as an outstanding achievement," said DeBoer.

DeBoer gave details of why the police officers received the awards. "On April 2nd, 2026, Detective Michael Knizewiski and Officer Drexal Haner demonstrated exemplary professionalism, empathy, and investigative excellence during a highly sensitive criminal investigation," DeBoer said. "Upon responding to two victims of a potential sexual assault in our department lobby, Officer Haner conducted a meticulous interview, establishing critical rapport and developing probable cause for multiple counts of sexual and felonious assault."

DeBoer said when recognizing that one victim was hesitant to pursue charges due to severe fear of retaliation, Officer Haner and Detective Knizewiski utilized victim-centered policing to build trust, guaranteed safety, and empower both victims to move forward with prosecution.

Ultimately, DeBoer noted, the suspect was successfully charged with five felony counts, including criminal sexual conduct first and second degree, possession of a firearm by a prohibited person, assault with a dangerous weapon, felony firearm, domestic violence, and assault and battery.

"The profound professionalism, kindness, tactical proficiency, and unwavering commitment to justice displayed by Detective Knizewiski and Officer Haner resulted in the removal of a serious sexual predator from the community," DeBoer said.

Chief DeBoer also presented awards to three lifeguards.

"On June 9, 2026, lifeguards Cam Patmos, Trinidad Marcus, and Ryker Diekem of South Haven exemplified extraordinary courage and skill in responding to a critical medical emergency at South Beach," DeBoer said. "While speaking with a beach patron, Lifeguard Patmos recognized the signs of a medical emergency and immediately activated the lifeguard emergency plan, promptly assessing the patient's condition."

Lifeguards Marcus and Diekema then arrived on the scene and initiated high-quality CPR while Lifeguard Patmos prepared and deployed the automated external defibrillator. "Their combined effort were critical," DeBoer pointed out. "The decisive intervention stabilized the patient, who was subsequently transported in stable condition by South Haven Area Emergency Services to Corewell Lakeland Hospital in St. Joseph."

DeBoer said the lifeguards' adherence to best practices, high-quality CPR, and early defibrillation directly led to saving a life. "For their quick, decisive, and highly effective actions that substantially contributed to a positive outcome in a life-threatening situation, Lifeguards Patmos, Marcus, and Diekema are most deservingly recognized with the South Haven Police Department Lifesaving Award."

SHAES answers 8 fire alarms in two hours

A fire at a South Haven business tonight (Wednesday) was one of eight alarms answered by South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES) in a two-hour period. All were related to high winds toppling trees. Other storm-related reports continued to be called-in through the night. (as of 8:15 p.m.)

The most serious was a fire at Haven Heating and Cooling on M-140, South Haven Township. SHAES responded to a 6:15 p.m. report of a transformer explosion which was immediately changed to a structure fire. Firefighters arrived to find a tree on top of the commercial building and heavy smoke pouring out the eaves. The fire was confined to the attic of the building.

Mutual aid brought Covert Township Fire Department to the scene. South Haven Police Department and South Haven Board of Public Works also responded.

The business was not open at the time. No injuries were reported to firefighters.

Riverfront Concert Series begins new season

By James Windell

The free Riverfront Concert Series returns for 10 Thursday nights of family-friendly music and kids activities beginning on Thursday June 25, 2026.

Sponsored by the City of South Haven and Foundry Hall, the 2026 Riverfront Concert Series kicks off with the Kevin McDaniel House Band playing classic oldies.

"Kevin McDaniel is our perennial favorite for classic rock," says Lotte Resek about the opening act. Following the Kevin McDaniel House Band will be J R Clark, a Michigan-based blues, soul, and rock musician who fronts the high-energy J R Clark Band at the concert on July 2. The J R Clark Band has gained a reputation as a group known for powerhouse blues performances, strong musicianship, and collaborations with nationally recognized artists.

On July 9 Cabildo, a West Michigan–based alternative Latin rock collective known for blending rock, folk, cumbia, ska, punk, and other Latin-American genres into high-energy, dance-driven performances, will perform.

DB Horns, a West Michigan brass band that plays pop, upbeat tunes, jazz standards, Dixieland, and gospel, returns to South Haven for the July 16 concert.

The Incantations, a compelling rock/folk-rock group from Kalamazoo, performs on July 23. The group combines folk storytelling with rock energy, strong guitar work, and emotionally expressive vocals.

A somewhat unusual offering is in store for concert goers on July 30 as Pan de Monium, the Bloomingdale Steel Pan Camp Band, takes the outdoor stage. Pan de Monium is a youth steel-drum ensemble from the Bloomingdale, Michigan area that performs publicly as part of community music events.

With no concert on August 6 because of South Haven's Blueberry Fest, the Riverfront Concert Series returns on August 13 with Jared Knox and the Hagar Bombers. A southwest Michigan modern country band known for high-energy 1990s-style country, Jared Knox and the Hagar Bombers feature strong Southern vocals, and lively bar-crowd shows,

A local favorite, the Casco Community Band, will play traditional and patriotic band music on August 20.

Closing out the series will be Desmond Jones on August 27. A five-piece rock/funk/jam band from Grand Rapids, Desmond Jones puts on high-energy shows with melodic guitar riffs, funky bass lines, groovy drum beats, and sax-driven improvisation.

"We have a lot of highlights this year," says Resek. "Cabildo is a really fun, high energy, alternative Latin rock band that played at our Riverfront Concert Series several years ago and it was a great show. The percussionist, Josh Dunigan, is bringing a bunch of extra Congas for people to play after the concert, too."

She says that while the J R Clark Band is playing in the series for the first time, other favorites returning are DB Horns, Kevin McDaniel and Jared Knox. "Jared Knox is a local country favorite that hasn't played for us in several years," Resek adds.

Resek points out that all of the concerts start at 7:00 pm, but before every concert there will be kid-friendly pre-concert activities beginning at 6:00 pm. "For instance, Foundry Hall will have an instrument petting zoo before the first concert," Resek says

All of the concerts will be on the lawn along the Black River at Riverfront Park, 345 Water Street, South Haven. Concert goers are encouraged to bring blankets or lawn chairs. In case of inclement weather, the concerts will move to the Huron Street Pavilion in downtown South Haven.

For more information, visit foundryhall.org

Film with Michigan roots premiers in South Haven

By James Windell

The movie "Old Heart" tells the story of African American GI Tom Johnson who joins forces with 24-year-old Sarah van Praag and the Dutch resistance to smuggle food and supplies from the liberated south across Nazi lines to starving cities in the northern Netherlands.

Their brief war-time love affair collapses at the war's end, but 60 years later Johnson, about to be sent off to assisted living by his family, ventures off determined to track down Sarah.

The film, produced by Muskegon resident Roger Rapoport, will be shown free at Lake Michigan College – South Haven on June 22, 2026 at 6:30 pm.

Sharona Shapiro, who is a member of the South Haven's First Hebrew Congregation and Program Chair, said that when members of the Congregation heard Roger Rapoport describe his film "Old Heart," they decided they would like to make it available to a wider audience.

Shapiro says that the movie is a delightful love story, but it is more important than just a love story. "It has a message for our time," she says, "because just last year the current administration sent out a directive informing the U.S. military cemetery in the Netherlands had

A bittersweet love story
From award-winning producer Roger Rapoport
Based on the acclaimed novel by Peter Ferry
Old Heart
60 years later can he find her again?
A new motion picture—Spring 2025
directed by Kirk Wahamaki & Leslye Witt
oldheartmovie.com
MAY 17TH 8PM. DOORS OPEN 7PM / VIP EVENT 6PM

to remove a wonderful panel series depicting the story of the Black soldiers who fought against the Nazis in the northern part of the Netherlands."

The First Hebrew Congregation reached out to Lily of the Valley Church in Covert and Temple B'nai Shalom in St. Joseph to co-host the showing of "Old Heart."

According to Shapiro, the film is very much a Michigan production. Rapoport not only produced the film but was the screenwriter. He found the novel "Old Heart" at the South Haven bookstore several years ago. The novel was written in 2015 by Peter Ferry, a Chicago area teacher, editor and writer, who died in 2024 just as the film was in production. Not only is the main character, Tom Johnson, a Detroiter, but the actors in the film are local actors.

"Old Heart" will be shown at Lake Michigan College, 125 Veterans Blvd., South Haven. Refreshments will be served at 6:30 pm, and following the 7:00 pm showing, there will be a discussion featuring Roger Rapaport and others associated with the film.

For more information about the event, contact Sharona Shapiro at shapirolerner@gmail.com

County Commissioners approve opioid settlement funding agreement

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

PAW PAW - Van Buren County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, June 9, approved the Opioid Settlement Funding Agreement with Van Buren County Specialty Courts for $155,000 in opioid settlement funds.

The Van Buren County Opioid Settlement Steering Committee reviewed and recommended funding for the Specialty Courts Opioid Recovery Support Program utilizing National Opioid Settlement Funds.

The Specialty Courts program serves non-violent individuals struggling with substance use and mental health challenges by providing treatment, accountability, recovery support, and community-based services designed to reduce recidivism and improve long-term stability. During FY2024, Specialty Courts served 213 participants across multiple court programs.

The proposed agreement provides reimbursement-based funding for services and support that help participants successfully engage in treatment and recovery.

Approved expenditures include staff education and training, housing support, transportation assistance through the purchase of a transportation van, and GED educational opportunities. The transportation component is intended to address one of the largest barriers for participants by helping individuals attend treatment appointments, court appearances, employment opportunities, and other recovery-related services.

The agreement provides for reimbursement-based opioid settlement funding in an amount not to exceed $155,000 utilizing National Opioid Settlement Funds. Funding allocations include $30,000 for staff education and training, $50,000 for housing-related support, $65,000 for transportation van purchase, and $10,000 for GED and educational opportunities.

The proposal was reviewed through the county's opioid settlement grant process, which references the 2024 Community Assessment, local data, evidence-based strategies, and Exhibit E allowable uses. The final contract agreement has been reviewed and approved by the county's legal counsel.

Commissioners approved a request to submit the annual grant application to Southwest Behavioral Health (SWMBH) for continued funding of Pretrial, Drug Treatment Court, and Sobriety Court.

Van Buren County's Specialty Courts requested to submit the annual grant application to Southwest Behavioral Health (SWMBH) for continued funding of Pretrial, Drug Treatment Court, and Sobriety Court. This application would cover ignition interlock for Sobriety Court participants, drug testing supplies for Drug Treatment Court, and Sobriety Court, with the addition of covering 30 percent of a peer support specialist to assist pretrial defendants navigate through the criminal process and the connection with treatment services.

Commissioners said this investment reflects a strong commitment to evidence-based interventions that promote accountability, reduce recidivism, and strengthen community well-being across the count.

The request to SWMBH is $72,292.48 (last year $71,466) with expenses to be reimbursed on a quarterly basis.

Commissioners approved authorization of the disposal of unclaimed, obsolete, and unusable Sheriff's Office property, and to permit the auction of these items.

The Van Buren County Sheriff's Office has accumulated various items of surplus and unclaimed property that are no longer needed or have exceeded their useful life. Certain items retain value and are appropriate for public auction in accordance with applicable Michigan law.

Commissioners approved the amended MERS Health Care Savings Program participation agreement.

The Command Group requested to discontinue participation in the MERS Health Care Savings Program (HCSP) after implementation of associated program fees. A Letter of Understanding (LOU) was executed on April 23, 2026, between Van Buren County, the Sheriff, and the Police Officers Labor Council (Command Unit), allowing the Command Unit to opt out of the HCSP.

The amendment is administrative in nature and reflects the mutually agreed upon change in participation status for the Command Unit.

Commissioners approved the reappointments of Katie Hillenbrand (Strohauer) and Zachary Morris to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority for three-year terms to expire May 31, 2029.

The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority is tasked with facilitating the rehabilitation and redevelopment of environmentally distressed, blighted, or functionally obsolete properties within Van Buren County.

Commissioners said Hillenbrand (Strohauer) and Morris have both served on the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority board dutifully and bring unique talents, experiences, and perspectives that help keep the board a broad-based group.

Both expressed their willingness to continue to serve the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and submitted their applications for reappointment.

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Bomb threat investigation leads to multiple charges

SOUTH HAVEN - On Saturday, June 13, at approximately 11 p.m., deputies with the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office responded to Gingerman Raceway during the Gridlife racing and music festival following reports of a disruptive individual making threats on the event grounds.

Event security personnel advised deputies that a male subject, who had previously been removed from the venue, had returned and was making alarming statements. Upon arrival, deputies detained the individual and began an investigation.

Security staff reported that the suspect, later identified as a 35-year-old male from Plymouth, Indiana, returned to the facility carrying a black bag. The male allegedly placed the bag near the music stage and informed security personnel that it contained a bomb, further claiming that the device had gone undetected by the event's explosive detection dogs. When the suspect attempted to retrieve the bag, security personnel intervened and detained him until law enforcement arrived.

Deputies searched the bag and determined that it did not contain any explosive materials. During the investigation, deputies located a white powdery substance that field-tested positive for ketamine. Suspected LSD was also recovered from the individual's possession.

While being placed under arrest, the suspect actively resisted deputies but was ultimately secured without further incident.

The male was transported to the Van Buren County Jail on charges including false report of a terrorist threat, false report of a bomb threat, possession of ketamine, resisting and obstructing police officers, and criminal trespass.

Dragon boats race to victory in South Haven

The popular summertime dragon boat races in South Haven moved to a new location and away from the Harborfest Festival this past weekend. The competitors, some as far away as Iowa, competed on the calmer waters of the Lake Arvesta Sports Complex.

Photos by Tom Renner

Porter Legacy Dunes grand opening on June 19

Some things are worth the wait!

Behind the scenes work began in 2019. Protection came in 2020. Additional grant funding and planning for the trail system began in 2022. Boardwalk construction started last fall. And now . . . summer 2026, it's ready.

The public is invited to attend the grand opening of Porter Legacy Dunes, Friday, June 19, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., located directly across the street from Pilgrim Haven Natural Area on 18th Avenue, South Haven.

This new 48-acre lakeshore preserve features a fully accessible half-mile loop trail, scenic boardwalk, and elevated overlook with breathtaking views of Lake Michigan.

It's been conserved through a partnership between Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and South Haven Area Recreation Authority and protects a rare forested backdune ecosystem - while also creating new opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to experience southwest Michigan's lakeshore.

The Grand Opening celebration will include a brief program and naturalists stationed along the trail to share information about the preserve. Attendees are encouraged to bring a blanket and a picnic to enjoy on the beach at Pilgrim Haven afterwards.

The preserve will remain closed to the public until the Grand Opening while final touches are made.

The 48-acre lakeshore property is appreciated by migrating raptors and songbirds navigating the Great Lakes Flyway, its rich backdune habitats offering food, shelter, and fresh water to migrating birds. Part of a two-mile natural corridor stretching from Pilgrim Haven Natural Area through Van Buren State Park, Porter Legacy Dunes is an oasis for exhausted avian travelers.

The Porter Family loved and protected this land for nearly 140 years - all the way until Catherine Porter Arini passed away a few years ago and left it to her fiancée, Scott Royle. Living far across the country, Royle knew he couldn't keep it and searched for the special property's next guardian. Owning the adjacent Pilgrim Haven Natural Area, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy seemed the obvious choice. What was less obvious was how it would be able to acquire the very expensive property. Perhaps a partnership .

A few years ago, SWMLC worked with the South Haven Area Recreation Authority (SHARA) that manages the facilities at Pilgrim Haven, to apply for the grants that built the preserve's barrier-free walkway, restrooms, and parking lot. SWMLC staff talked with Royle describing how, by working with SHARA, it might secure another Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant that could provide the lion's share of the purchase funding – but that it would take some time. Royle agreed that it was worth the wait.

Working with SHARA's Chairman Ross Stein, SWMLC took a chance and asked the state if it could submit an application, even though it knew that the deadline had already passed. The Trust Fund staff were so pleased by the project that they said "yes" and approved the request to submit an out-of-cycle proposal. Ultimately, the Porter Legacy Dunes project received the second highest score in that cycle and was awarded $2.26 million by the state.

One of the key ingredients in the project's success is Scott Royle himself, who graciously made a significant reduction in the property's purchase price as a testament to his love for Catherine, and respect for her family and the land. Other important contributions came from the Carls Foundation, the J.A. Woollam Foundation, the Esther & George Jaruga Charitable Foundation, and several private donors. Finally, there were the donations made by regular folks, who saw the property's ecological worth and physical beauty, and generously stepped up to meet the $350,000 fund-raising goal.

Altogether, the campaign raised over $3.4 million for the purchase and stewardship of the property. With Pilgrim Haven's parking and other visitor amenities next door, plans are to leave Porter Legacy Dunes mostly natural and have entered into a 20-year Memorandum of Understanding with SHARA (who will officially own the preserve) that defines SWMLC's role in managing the preserve's natural habitats.

Senior Services receives cyber security information from Sheriff's Office

The Van Buren County Sheriff's Office recently recognized Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott and Reserve Sergeant Walter Grech for providing a cybersecurity presentation to participants at Senior Services of Van Buren County.

The presentation focused on the growing importance of mobile device security and steps individuals can take to better protect themselves from cyber threats. As smartphones and tablets have become essential tools for communication, banking, healthcare access, and social interaction, they have also become attractive targets for cybercriminals.

Reserve Sergeant Grech led discussions on common wireless connectivity threats, including risks associated with unsecured public WiFi networks, malicious 'maninthemiddle' attacks, fraudulent mobile transactions, phishing attempts, and other cyber threats that frequently target mobile device users. Participants learned practical strategies to safeguard their personal information and reduce their risk of becoming victims of cybercrime.

Sheriff Abbott supported the presentation by emphasizing the importance of cybersecurity awareness within the community and highlighting how cybercrime continues to affect residents of all ages. Sheriff Abbott encouraged attendees to remain vigilant, verify suspicious communications, and report potential scams or fraudulent activity to law enforcement. He also advised attendees to follow the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Facebook page and regularly review the weekly 'From the Desk of Sheriff Abbott' postings, which provide timely information on public safety concerns, emerging threats, crime trends, scams, community events, and other relevant county activities affecting Van Buren County residents.

"Cybersecurity begins with awareness and education," said Sgt. Grech. "By understanding both the technology we use every day and the threats that target it, individuals can take simple but effective steps to better protect themselves and their information."

Sheriff Abbott added, "Technology plays an important role in our daily lives, but it also creates opportunities for criminals to target unsuspecting individuals. Education is one of the most effective tools we have to help our residents recognize threats and protect themselves online."

The Van Buren County Sheriff's Office remains committed to community outreach and public education efforts that help residents stay safe both online and offline. As technology continues to evolve, cybersecurity awareness plays a critical role in protecting individuals, families, and communities from emerging digital threats.

Residents interested in learning more about cybersecurity best practices are encouraged to follow the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office for future educational opportunities and public safety information.

The City of South Haven and Foundry Hall
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☺ 6/25 **Kevin McDaniel House Band**- classic rock
7/2 **JR Clarke Blues Band -** blues!
7/9 **Cabildo** - Rock en Español!
☺ 7/16 **DB Horns** - Brass band pop music
☺ 7/23 **The Incantations** - Americana, rock, folk
☺ 7/30 **Pan de Monium** - Bloomingdale steel pan
8/6 Blueberry Fest
8/13 **Jared Knox and the Hägarbombs** - country
☺ 8/20 **Casco Band** - traditional band music
☺ 8/27 **Desmond Jones** - funk/rock jam band

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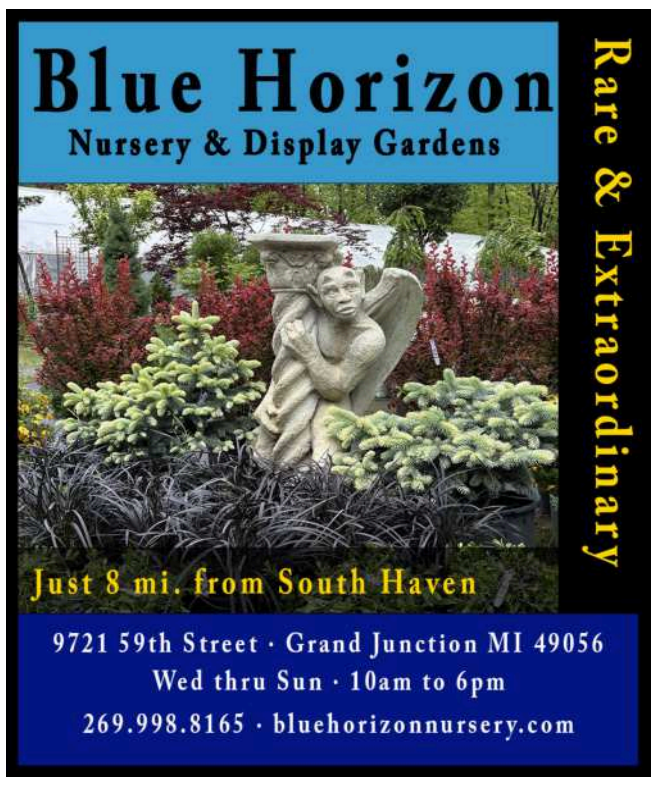
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Celebrated Lincoln Trio to perform in South Haven

By James Windell

Fanfare Magazine called them the Lincoln Trio "one of hottest trios in the business" and STRAD Magazine referred to them as "Sensational," "Bewitching," and "Models of vibrancy and control."

The widely celebrated Lincoln Trio performs a classical concert as part of the South Haven Performance Series on June 26, 2026 at the First United Methodist Church.

Nominated for a 2017 Grammy Award for Best Performance by a Small Ensemble and a 2024 Latin Grammy, the Lincoln Trio was also a First Prize winner at the 2008 Masterplayers International Competition in Venice.

Formed in 2003, the trio has been praised for their polished presentations of well-known chamber works and their ability to forge new paths with contemporary repertoire. The group's reputation as a first-rate ensemble draws an eclectic audience of sophisticated music lovers, young admirers of contemporary programs, and students discovering chamber music for the first time.

Praised for their "joy of sheer technical ability, unanimity of phrasing and beautiful blended tone," each member is an artist of international renown. Violinist Desirée Ruhstrat has performed throughout the U.S. and Europe, appearing at the White House and performing on a live radio broadcast heard around the world with the Berlin Radio Orchestra. Cellist David Cunliffe has performed with the BBC and Royal Scottish orchestras as well as touring as a member of the Balanescu Quartet. Pianist Marta Aznavoorian has garnered critical acclaim for her engagements with orchestras and concert halls worldwide including Chicago Symphony Center, John F. Kennedy Center and the Sydney Opera House.

As a trio, they have performed throughout the United States, including appearances at Carnegie's Weil Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Bryant Park Festival, Ravinia Festival, Green Center, Barge Music, Poisson Rouge, the Indianapolis Symphony Beethoven Chamber Music Series, University of Chicago, Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series and in Springfield, Illinois, where the trio was chosen to celebrate the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial celebration with President Barack Obama.

The Lincoln Trio will perform on Friday, June 26, at 7:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church, 429 Michigan Ave., South Haven. Admission to the concert is $15 and students are admitted free. Tickets are cash at the door on the day of the concert.

For more information, visit the South Haven Performance Series website at southhavenperformanceseries.org

Ramageddon hosts free robotics skills camp

By James Windell

Kids who want to learn more about robotics can attend a Robotics Summer Skills Camp in June and July.

Hosted by Ramageddon, South Haven High School's robotics team, the free camp is open to middle school and high school students interested in hands-on learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math.

"Our camp is for any middle school and high school students who are interested in learning about robotics," says Kim Wise, a Ramageddon robotics coach.

Wise says that almost any aspect of robotics will be covered during the two weeks of camp that begins on June 24, 2026.

"We're going to have super activities throughout the two weeks of camp, including computer aided design and building projects," Wise says. She emphasizes that campers may choose to focus on robotics design and manufacturing, robotics programming, or business and marketing.

"Something cool we're going to do this year is have each student build a catapult built out of two by fours," she notes. "They will be mini catapults that they will be able to take home with them."

Students who are new to robotics may explore multiple areas throughout the camp. Wise adds that kids who are new to robotics will feel welcome at the camp.

"We are happy to have students who have no prior knowledge of robotics attend," she says.

Mentors from the South Haven High School Robotics team, as well as mentors from other school districts, will be available to help students learn.

Camp sessions will be held at South Haven High School, from 5:30 pm to 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 24, Thursday, June 25, and Friday, June 26; and from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm on Monday, July 6, Tuesday, July 7, Wednesday, July 8, and Thursday, July 9.

Each session begins with a fun and challenging team building activity before students break into groups to learn about shop tools and equipment, Java programming, computer-aided design, videography, graphic design, social media, and other robotics-related skills.

Pre-registration is required and may be completed at www.ramageddon.com. For more information, contact Kim Wise at kwise@shps.org.

Southside Denny returns to First Congregational Church

By James Windell

Dennis Snyder, a blues guitarist who goes by the name of Southside Denny, returns to the First Congregational Church for Father's Day concert on Sunday, June 21, 2026.

Having played with many blues artists, such as Luther Allison, Pinetop Perkins, Lefty Diz, Larry McCray, and John Fogerty, Southside Denny is an international touring musician who has established a solid reputation as a solo acoustic guitarist, electric blues rocker, and composer.

Born and raised in South Bend, Indiana, he discovered the blouse while listening to the radio. Since he lived near Chicago, as a teenager he began listening to some of his blues idols in person.

It was one of those idols, the great Chicago blues guitarist Luther Allison, who took an interest in Denny.

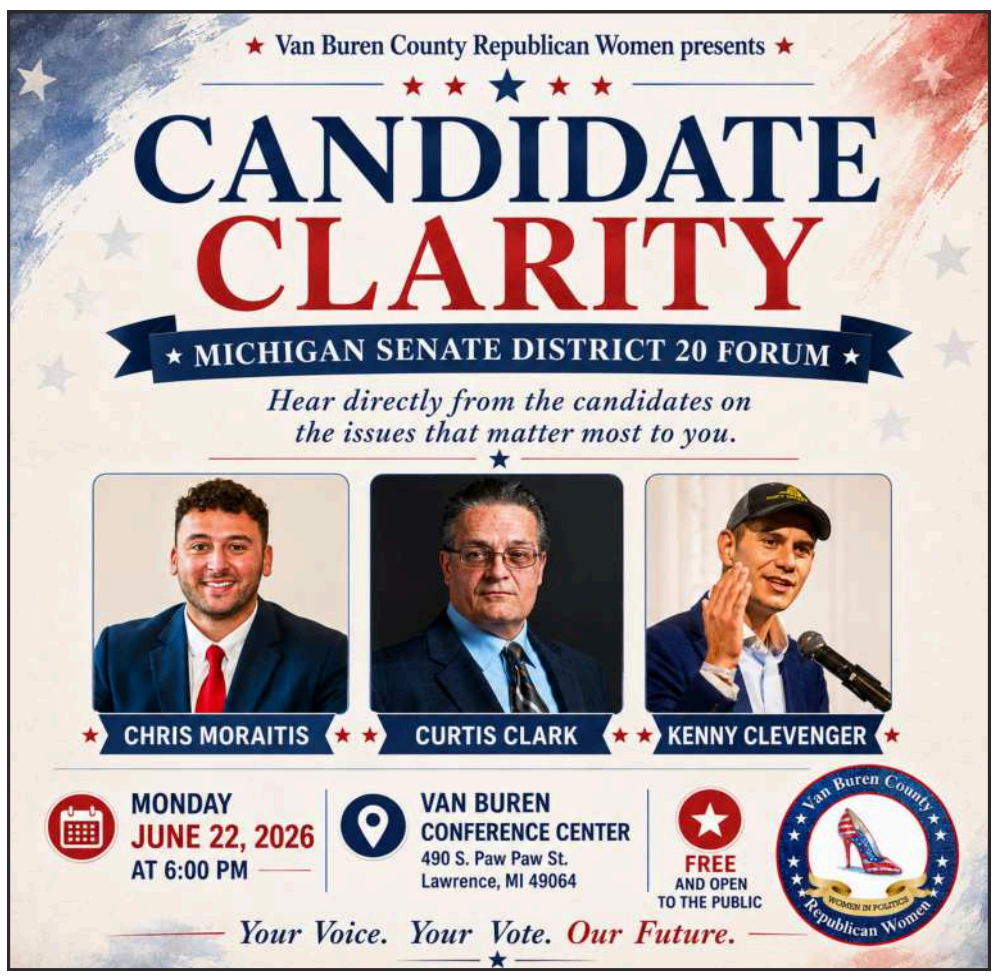
"He took me under his wing and I used to play with him a lot when I was a teenager," Denny said in a phone interview from his home outside of Montreal. "That's what really did it for me at that point. Getting on the stage with him and other Chicago guys and feeling that whole thing. I said that 'This is what I really want to do.'"

He's been an opening act for a Who's Who of Chicago blues acts that include Ray Charles, Lonnie Mack, Buddy Guy, Albert Collins, Stevie Ray Vaughn, and Taj Mahal. He has also shared the stage with many legendary rockers and rock groups including The Beach Boys, Edgar Winter, BTO, Three Dog Night, and Styxx.

In 2007, Denny relocated to Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He has since performed at the International Festival du Jazz de Montréal, the International Festival du blues de Mont Tremblant, Riverfront Blues, Trois Rivières en Blues, and other venues.

Southside Denny will perform at the First Congregational Concert Series at the First Congregational UCC, 651 Phoenix Street, South Haven, at 3:00 pm on Sunday, June 21, 2026. Tickets are $20 at the door, and admission is free for children 12 and under.

For more information, call Diane & Lisa at (269) 637-3804 (opt. 5).



Derhammer named new Paw Paw MS principal

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod#gmail.com

PAW PAW - Tracy Derhammer has been named the new Paw Paw Middle School principal, replacing Jerry McDaniel, who retired at the end of the current school year. Derhammer had served as assistant principal at Paw Paw High School.

Other new hires by the Paw Paw Board of Education at the June 8, board of education meeting include: Eliana Moran – early elementary first grade teacher, Megan Paczas – later elementary fourth grade teacher, Megan Scohera – high school counselor, Stefanie Miller – high school summer credit recovery, Rick Miller – high school summer credit recovery, Sarah Chandler – high school summer credit recovery, Randi Genung - TOR summer credit recovery, Heidi Birkenbach - TOR summer credit recovery, Cassandra Taylor - summer learning special ed.

The board also accepted a $1,000 donation from The Redman Group for the middle school STEAM Program; a $6,122.24 donation from 2Paw Robotics for hotels for Worlds competition for the high school robotics program, and $3,417 for the concession percentage from the Paw Paw Athletic Boosters for the track program.

Library celebrates America 250 with Pioneer Cemetery and Revolutionary War veteran

PAW PAW – As America prepares to mark its 250th anniversary on July 4, the Paw Paw District Library to celebrate America 250, presented the first of several events scheduled over the coming months.

On Wednesday, June 3, the library's Local History Librarian, Martha Deming Maytnier, and history buff and reenactor, Steve Rigoni, of Paw Paw, presented a special tour of Pioneer Cemetery, the first recorded cemetery in Paw Paw.

The tour included a presentation by Rigoni of one of the cemetery's permanent resident and Revolutionary War veteran William Dyckman, Jr. William M. Dyckman was born in 1761 and died in 1846. Rigoni, speaking as Dyckman might have, said, "In 1846, I was buried here, eight years after the first burial in the cemetery."

Why did Dyckman travel to Paw Paw? Dyckman said, "Well…I think I should begin with my family history. The Dyckman family came to New Amsterdam from Holland in 1666. New Amsterdam was a colony of the Dutch Republic on the East Coast that would become the states of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Connecticut.

"During this time, nations were vying for domination of lucrative trade routes around the globe. New Amsterdam was a major trade center for the Dutch West India Company. After the third Anglo-Dutch War in 1674, the colony of New Amsterdam was ceded to the English."

Dyckman continued, "My ancestor, Jan Dyckman, was called a patroon. That meant he had been granted a manorial estate by the Dutch West India Company. His estate was at the very north end of Manhattan Island between the Hudson and the Harlem Rivers. Today, it is the neighborhoods of Inwood and Washington Heights."

Jan had built the family homestead near what is now 210th Street and the Harlem River.

"Our family were staunch patriots. When the American Revolution began, my father (also a William), was afraid that they would be targets of the British. Our family left their home on Manhattan Island and sought refuge in upstate New York," said Dyckman.

Dyckman volunteered for the Westchester Guides, with his brothers Abraham and Michael. Most of the guides were in their teens. Dyckman was only 14.

History recorded the Westchester Guides were "an intelligent, enterprising, and courageous lot of young men, skilled in the use of weapons, and possessed of sound judgement and intimate knowledge of the topography of the land," said Dyckman.

He continued, "We were considered civilians, not militia, and our main purpose was to act as guides to the Continental and French forces."

The first historical record of the Guides was in October of 1776, in a dispatch to Major General William Heath just before the battle of White Plains. The dispatch mentions each regiment will be "sent a guide will be acquainted with the road to White Plains and vicinity…"

According to Dyckman, White Plains was the last opportunity for the British to trap Gen. George Washington's army and potentially could have ended the "rebellion" in its first year.

The surrender of British General Johnny Burgoyne's forces to General Horatio Gates after the Battle of Saratoga, New York, in October of 1777, was a major victory for the patriots, according to Dyckman.

Saratoga was "a great turning point of the war," because it was the deciding factor that brought French assistance, the last element needed for victory.

But British loyalists and their allies from the Iroquois nations continued to raid American frontier settlements.

"In 1778, when I was eligible for military service, I formally enlisted in the Orange County militia," said Dyckman.

Orange County, New York is in the lower Hudson Valley.

"The Hudson River Valley was important to prevent the British from splitting New England off from the colonies, protect vital supply lines, and secure the strategic highlands around West Point," said Dyckman.

The Orange County Regiment was charged with defending the Hudson highlands. "I spent the next two years patrolling the Hudson River," said Dyckman.

In 1779, General George Washington ordered Major General John Sullivan and General James Clinton to "do something about the threat of the destruction" of these settlements in upstate New York and Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Dyckman said the Sullivan Expedition was one of the largest campaigns of the Continental Army.

"Sullivan was assigned four Continental brigades totaling over 4,500 men and I was one of those recruits," said Dyckman.

According to Dyckman, the Sullivan expedition did not end Iroquois participation in the Revolutionary War, but the destruction of their villages and crops forced more than 5,000 Iroquois to seek British protection at Fort Niagara.

"In 1781, I was back with the Orange County Regiment," said Dyckman. In 1782, my brother Abram, was 22 and known as "Brom." He was known as one of the most daring of the Guides," said Dyckman.

In March of 1782, Brom and several of the Westchester Guides executed a raid on a Loyalist-British camp.

"The British were entirely taken by surprise, and the Guides were able to capture 20 men and as many horses," said Dyckman.

He continued, "But they were pursued, and while halted for a time to rest their horses, the enemy found them. My brother, Brom, was riding in the rear of the party and was hit by a rifle shot. He died a few days later."

"I continued to serve to the end of the war in 1783," said Dyckman. When our Dyckman family returned to the family farm, we had a very bitter surprise. British loyalists had burned our home to the ground and destroyed the surrounding orchards," said Dyckman.

"In 1786, I married Maria Smith and we took our family further west to Onondaga County in the state of New York," said Dyckman. "Maria and I had three children; another William, Evert and Jane. My son, Evert Brown Dyckman, inherited my wanderlust," said Dyckman.

According to Dyckman, Evert had helped to build the Erie Canal and then ran a very successful boatyard and coopering business in Onondaga County.

But Evert thought there was more opportunity in the Northwest Territories.

In 1836, he traveled to Detroit and then followed the Territorial Trail to Paw Paw where he met two early founders of Paw Paw, Isaac Willard and Peter Gremps, and entered a partnership in a gristmill.

Evert also purchased about 1,000 acres in Van Buren County, as well as property in Kalamazoo and Allegan counties.

"Then, in the autumn of 1838, my wife, Maria, and I, decided to come to Paw Paw with Evert and his seven children, Aaron, Prudence, Maria, Elizabeth, Valentine, Esther and Harriet. Two Dyckman nephews and two Dyckman nieces also traveled with us to Paw Paw in Van Buren County," said Dyckman.

Dyckman said, "Evert was considered an important person. He became a judge and forever was known as Judge Dyckman."

But he did not stay in Paw Paw.

In 1841, he moved to Schoolcraft in Kalamazoo County and remained there for rest of his life.

Evert's son Valentine was only 12 years old when he died from one of the many fevers common in those days.

"Evert's first wife, Harriet Hinckley Dyckman, had died in 1838, just before our family moved to Paw Paw," said Dyckman.

He continued, "Evert married Almeria LaGrave Daniels soon after arriving in Paw Paw, but they were only married for a year when she died in 1840, at the age 27," said Dyckman.

However, Evert remained invested in Paw Paw, in 1860, Judge Dyckman and John Smolk built the now familiar hotel named the Dyckman House on the corner of Main and Kalamazoo streets.

Evert died in Schoolcraft at age 82 and is buried in the Schoolcraft Township Cemetery.

"Even though Evart moved to Schoolcraft, I stayed here in Paw Paw. My wife, Maria, died in 1845, and I followed in 1846. I was 84 years old. We are both buried here in Pioneer Cemetery," said Dyckman.

He added, "There are other family members buried here with us."

"In 1916, the home that my dad built after the British destroyed the original during the Revolutionary War was left to the city of New York by Mary Alice Dyckman Dean and Fannie Frederick Dyckman Welch," said Dyckman.

Dyckman continued, "The address today is 204th Street and Broadway. It is the last remaining Dutch farmhouse in New York City and is now a museum and city park."

Dyckman concluded, "Most Dyckman's tended to remain in the Hudson Valley, but I suffered from wanderlust."

Maytnier then presented a history of Pioneer Cemetery and some of its permanent residents.

The cemetery was originally known as Old Town Cemetery.

According to research by Maytnier, Susan Dodge, wife of Daniel O. Dodge, was the first person to be buried in Pioneer Cemetery in 1838.

Susan and seven other unknown people were buried in the garden of Dodge's Tavern.

Maytnier said, "It was not known what caused the deaths of these people, but there were several epidemics, such as cholera and typhoid, that swept Michigan during these times."

Maytnier said, "One of the first things that Paw Paw founding father, Peter Gremps did was to entice Daniel O. Dodge to move from Schoolcraft to Paw Paw and set up a tavern.

In 1834, Gremps gave Dodge land on the south side of Main Street in Section 7, (now block 100), near the corner of Main and Kalamazoo streets.

Gremps also built a crude shack that had four rooms and measured 16-by-24 feet on this land to serve as the tavern. The original tavern was enlarged in 1835 and again in 1836.

Gremps knew that a tavern would help Paw Paw to become an established town on the route from Detroit to St. Joseph.

The route followed trails that had been used for centuries by NativeAmericans.

First called the St. Joseph Trail, it became known as the Territorial Trail, and then US 12 and today, Interstate 94.

It was surveyed in 1829, construction began in 1830, declared a public highway in 1831 and first used by stagecoach in 1836.

Dodge's Tavern soon became a well-known and celebrated stop on the route, largely it was said because of Mrs. Dodge's cooking.

Approximately two years later, a town hall meeting was held on April 2, 1838, to address the need for a village cemetery.

Maytnier said a vote was taken to allocate funds for purchasing and fencing land for the purpose of this cemetery.

One and a half acres in the northeast corner of Section 12 was purchased from Rodney and Jane Hinkley for $50. Section 12 is just north of the village.

Edward Barnum, who arrived in Paw Paw in 1835, and was a surveyor, laid out the cemetery.

Maytnier said the cemetery was surveyed into twenty-one "ranges" (rows) of burial space. The ranges or rows were meant to be 14 feet apart and numbered west to east.

"It appears that the ranges or rows were not divided into lots. Each party was allowed to occupy as many grave spaces as needed," sad Maytnier.

A space of 14 feet between ranges 11 and 12 was reserved for an entrance.

In the record book and map, burials are designated by the range and then by the distance in feet from the south line of the cemetery, according to Maytnier.

She said all burials were made with the head of the grave facing west.

The exact number of burials is unknown, according to Maytnier. She said an estimate is 300, with 287 burials that have been located on the grounds, but only 125 have been marked and identified.

A survey of Pioneer Cemetery was done at an unknown date by Barbara Meyers and Lisa Corliss. "They may have been working along with one of the Boy Scout Troops," said Maytnier. A board located in the cemetery displays the results of their survey.

A photographic survey of Pioneer Cemetery was done by Diane Ross, Lois Richardson and Kyra Dalrymple in 2010.

The Paw Paw District Library's Local History Room has a notebook with photographs taken at that time.

Maytnier said Pioneer Cemetery was used from 1838 until 1859. In 1860, Prospect Hill Cemetery began to accept burials.

A review of the photographic survey done by Diane Ross, Lois Richardson and Kyra Dalrymple shows many of the graves are those of young children.

A review of records from the land survey done by Barbara Meyers and Lois Corliss shows that several family burials show the same year. It might be that they died because of one of the epidemics.

The burials were made before Paw Paw had regular newspaper coverage, which means that it is difficult to find information on the people.

Maytnier said, "In an attempt to put information behind some of the names, I used the History of Van Buren County. I also tried to search family connections for some of the names recognized."

Among those were:

Susan B. Dodge and Daniel O. Dodge. Susan was the first person buried in Pioneer Cemetery in 1838. Daniel is also buried in Pioneer Cemetery, but no date is given for his burial. Also, a Thomas W. Dodge, who died at age 36 in 1845. Susan was the sister of Jerimiah Simmons. Jerimiah was known as Squire Simmons and was very influential in the early days of Paw Paw. It was Susan who wrote to encourage him to emigrate to Paw Paw.

Joseph Landman Bitely and Lourilla ? Durkee Bitely. Joseph was one of the early lawyers in the village. The Durkees were one of the pioneer families.

Maytnier found an article that talked about a Mrs. Josephine Bitely. She was the last of the family and died at age 98 in the family home located on the corner of Kalamazoo and Elm streets.

The Rev. Zenas Case was an early Baptist minister who died at age 48.

Col. Anthony Cooley and his wife, Amanda, were early members of St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Anthony fought in the War of 1812.

Eliza Curtiss, possibly the wife or daughter of Ela Curtiss, a carpenter who built the Boothby home and his own residence on Gremps Street.

Jane Darling Harrison was the wife of Thaddeus Runnell Harrison, at one time the town clerk. He was also chief of the Fire Department, and for a time, owner and publisher of the True Northerner, a forerunner of The Courier-Leader.

Orphelia Hathaway was the wife of Dr. William Baker Hathaway, an early surgeon. Marth also found mention of a Charles Nelson Hathaway and his wife. Mrs. Hathaway was a member of the Coterie Club and won a prize at the annual Coterie Club quilt show.

Azuba Hayes died at 86. She was the wife of Edmund Hayes, a tailor. An Archibald Hayes arrived in Paw Paw in 1834. He was the first shoemaker to reside in Paw Paw. His son, Simeon Buys was the first "white" child born in Paw Paw and a Civil War soldier.

Asa Hicks' stone is probably the most elaborate stone still standing in Pioneer Cemetery. According to Maytnier, his grave marker says he died in 1796, forty-two years before Pioneer Cemetery opened.

George S. Mears was reported to be the son of Albert Mears. Edwin Mears arrived in Paw Paw in 1836. He was a merchant. According to the book, History of Van Buren County, during a hunting expedition, Edwin was separated from his friends. "He wandered through the woods for four days, cold and hungry and on the fourth day, found himself on the shore of Lake Michigan, where there was an abandoned hut. He had about made up his mind that he would perish when he heard voices," said Martha. As it turns out, the voices he heard were a search party sent out to find him.

Charles N. Mather died at eight months old. Reuben Mather was a brother to Pvt. Spenser Mather. Their father was Hiram Mather. "Lt. Carl Mather portrayed last year in Voices from the Past, was the grandson of Spenser Mather," said Maytnier.

Capt. Henry Rhodes, father of Henry Rhodes. Henry Rhodes came to Paw Paw in 1835. His wife was Dimaris (Parker) Rhodes.

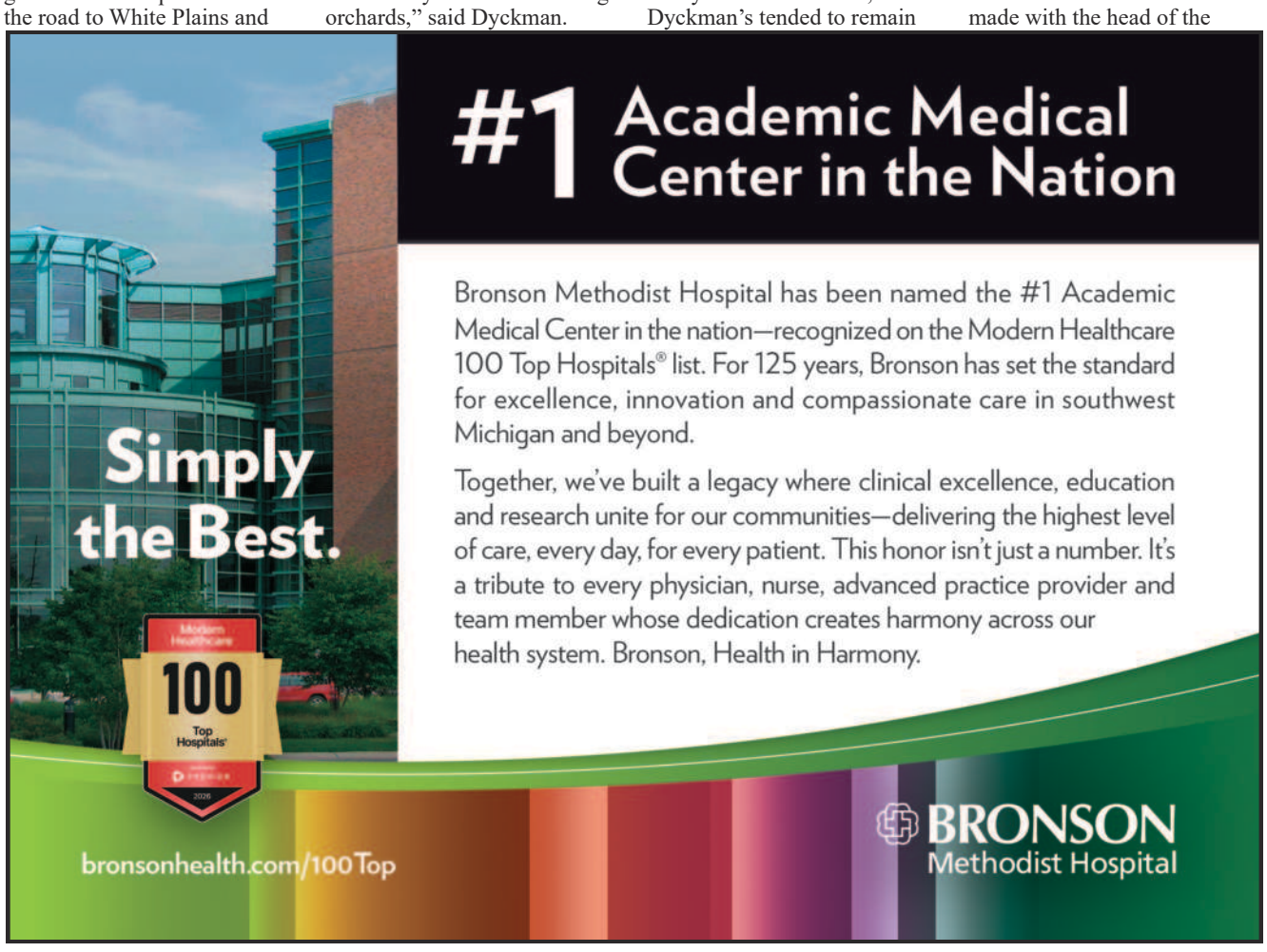
Charles and Sally Darling. Charles was a brother of E. D. Darling. A Loren Darling was one of the first members of First Presbyterian Church and was a trustee in 1844.

Harriette Underhill died at age 27. Lula Sherman Underhill and Zellon Underhill. Lula's father, John D. Sherman built one of the large Queen Anne style homes on Gremps Street, where Lula and Zellon lived. Lula was the last to die in 1935, at age 61, Lula left a bequest to the library in her will. They did not have any children, so Harriette may have been the daughter of a sibling of Zellon.

On July 8, at 6 p.m., Roger Henderson will read the Declaration of Independence from the steps of the Van Buren County Courthouse.

This is part of an event planned by The National America 250 Committee and the America 250 MI to have the Declaration read across the nation at the same time on July 8, according to Maytnier.

Another event will be held Thursday, July 18, according to Maytnier.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VIEWPOINT

Summer Vacation for Congress? Must Be Nice

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX ■ PUBLISHER ■

As millions of Americans head off to work each morning, balancing family budgets, worrying about rising costs, paying taxes, and trying to keep their businesses afloat, there is one group of people who seem to operate under a completely different set of rules: members of Congress.

The U.S. House and Senate are once again preparing for their lengthy summer recess, taking weeks away from Washington while many of the nation's most pressing problems remain unresolved.

The Senate has decided to take June 27 to July 12 off, then August 10 to September 14. The House of Representatives will be off June 11 to June 22 and then August 1 to September 14. They are back in session briefly on Sept. 1,2,3. Add it all up and both chambers are taking a six week vacation.

Consider what is currently sitting on Congress' plate and why our legislatures ought to spend more time in Washington. The national debt continues to soar past $37 trillion. Border security remains a contentious issue. Americans are concerned about inflation and the price of gas, housing affordability, Medicare, Social Security, and national security threats around the globe. Yet lawmakers will soon scatter across the country for a summer break that many working Americans can only dream about.

To be fair, members of Congress will argue that they are not truly on vacation. They will say they are meeting with constituents, attending events in their districts, and conducting official business. Some undoubtedly do.

But let's be honest. If an employee told his boss he needed six or seven weeks away from the office because he planned to meet customers occasionally, most employers would laugh him out of the room.

The average American worker receives about two weeks of paid vacation annually. Many small business owners take none at all. Farmers don't get summers off. Factory workers don't get summers off. Teachers may have summers away from the classroom, but many spend that time preparing for the next school year or working additional jobs.

Congress, meanwhile, often spends fewer than half the days of the year actually in session.

The Founding Fathers never envisioned a full-time political class. In the early days of the republic, legislators traveled long distances by horse and carriage and still managed to conduct the nation's business. Today, members can fly across the country in a matter of hours and communicate instantly with anyone on the planet. Technology has eliminated many of the logistical challenges that once justified lengthy recesses.

What message does it send when lawmakers leave Washington while major issues remain unresolved? It suggests that politics has become more about campaigning than governing.

Americans don't elect senators and representatives to spend their time raising campaign money, attending fundraisers, or preparing for the next election. They elect them to solve problems.

If Congress completed its work on time, balanced budgets, passed appropriations bills before deadlines, and addressed the nation's challenges in a responsible manner, perhaps these lengthy recesses would be easier to justify.

But that's not what Americans see.

Instead, they see deadlines missed, budgets passed at the last minute, partisan gridlock, and endless finger-pointing. Then, when summer arrives, Congress heads for the exits.

Perhaps it's time to rethink the congressional calendar. Maybe lawmakers should spend more time legislating and less time campaigning. Maybe Congress should work a schedule that more closely resembles the people they represent.

After all, the American taxpayer is footing the bill.

The next time members of Congress prepare for another extended recess, they should remember the people who sent them there—the workers, business owners, farmers, nurses, truck drivers, and retirees who don't have the luxury of simply walking away from their responsibilities for weeks at a time.

Washington likes to call Congress "the people's house."

Sheriff's Report-Sheriff's deputies selected to SWAT Team

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

"Congratulations to Deputy Kyle Gabrielse and Deputy Cory Delich for being selected to be our newest members of our SWAT Team. Tryouts and interviews were done for internal candidates as well as external candidates from other agencies. No question these two will do a great job on the team," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott.

Van Buren County Central Dispatch handled 8,344 phone calls in May, putting the yearly total at 39,444. "Fun fact, they've taken 14,084 911 calls to date. Uniform Response had 391 traffic stops in May, bringing the yearly total to 1,814. Uniform Response took 819 calls for service in May, bringing the yearly total to 3,694," said Sheriff Abbott.

"There is a new scam going around "Free" Prize. The scammers use well-known places such as Costco or Marriott for example. They tell you you've been selected for an exclusive opportunity and all you must do is respond to a quick survey. They also let you know that you'll be awarded a brand-new iPhone. If you complete the survey, you'll be prompted to enter your credit card number and personal information to pay a small delivery fee for the new iPhone. Remember, it's unlikely that a legitimate organization will ask you to pay a fee with your credit card to receive a free prize. Use caution when you receive an unexpected message that claims you won a prize, especially if it pressures you to act quickly. Lastly, if you receive a suspicious email, don't select any links in it. Instead, check the organizations official website or contact them directly to verify if the survey is legitimate," said Sheriff Abbott.

Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response handled a larceny in Columbia Township of an UTV. "A camo Kawasaki mule was taken from a farm. The UTV has aftermarket oversized tires, a plastic roof, and an aftermarket sound system mounted to the roof behind the front seat. Anyone with any information is asked to call our office," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Congratulations to Deputy Eric Calhoun and Deputy Randy Whitmore for Receiving MSA's (Michigan Sheriffs' Association) Distinguished Service Award at this year's Summer Conference that just took place. They were honored with the award for their initial actions in Pine Grove Township which involved an individual setting off pipe bombs trying to injure or kill them," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a Break-in in Waverly Township. The unknown suspects at the time stole a 2016 Yamaha Kodiak four-wheeler, green in color. They also stole a Husqvarna 440 chainsaw and a Johnson chainsaw, red in color. "Our Criminal Investigations Unit and Narcotic Unit executed two search warrants in Waverly Township which was related to these items stolen as well as drug activity. Detectives did locate the stolen quad and the Johnson chainsaw. Detectives also located methamphetamine," said Sheriff Abbott. Two adult males were lodged for the break-in, possession of methamphetamine, and additional charges are pending through the Van Buren County Prosecutors Office. The quad and chainsaw were returned to the victim," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Our office along with Decatur Police Department assisted the Allegan County Sheriff's Office in locating a suspect wanted on an attempted murder warrant. While detectives were doing surveillance on the residence, Decatur Police Department and Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response located the suspect vehicle driving in the village. A traffic stop was made and detectives from our office and Allegan went to the location to interview the driver. While the driver was being interviewed in the village, detectives observed a vehicle leaving the residence which they were still doing surveillance on, and a stop was made on that vehicle. The wanted suspect was found hiding in the back seat and taken into custody," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Our Narcotic detectives received information about an individual in the Harford area with a large amount of methamphetamine in his possession. Detectives, along with Uniform Response located the suspect vehicle and attempted to stop it for traffic violations. The suspect fled from deputies and detectives. Upon coming into Hartford Cty, Pokagon Tribal Police attempted to deploy stop sticks, at which time the suspect avoided them by going into a parking lot. Once in the parking lot, he was taken into custody. A stolen 9mm, nearly an ounce of methamphetamine, and an open pint of whiskey was found in the vehicle," said Sheriff Abbott. The suspect now faces numerous charges.

Masonic Lodge sponsored grave marker cleaning, repair event

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

PAW PAW - On Sunday, June 14, members of the Paw Paw-Lawton Masonic Lodge No. 25, sponsored a grave marker cleaning and repair event at Prospect Hill Cemetery in Paw Paw Township.

The Paw Paw – Lawton Masonic Lodge No. 25 invited Bobbie Watson Mathis, of Union City, Mich., to educate and train the more than 30 people who attended on how to properly level, epoxy and clean markers and monuments at the cemetery.

With temperatures in the low 60s, the group spent several hours in the cemetery, with help from the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Jail Work Crew, who provided assistance at the event.

At the conclusion, Worshipful Master Andy Sanborn-Whiteman presented Mathis with a 200 anniversary Michigan Masons Challenge Coin. Worshipful Brother Dakotah Hoskins presented Mathis with this year's Grand Master's pin. The Masonic Lodge also presented her with a check from their LCA funds from the Michigan Masonic Charitable Foundation (MMCF) for putting on the class to preserve the area's local history.

Mathis said her goal at the event was to develop roots like this for groups to be self-sufficient and out on their own.

Mathis said she was impressed with the cemetery's appearance, calling it a "beautiful cemetery."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sen. Warren has no business lecturing Musk

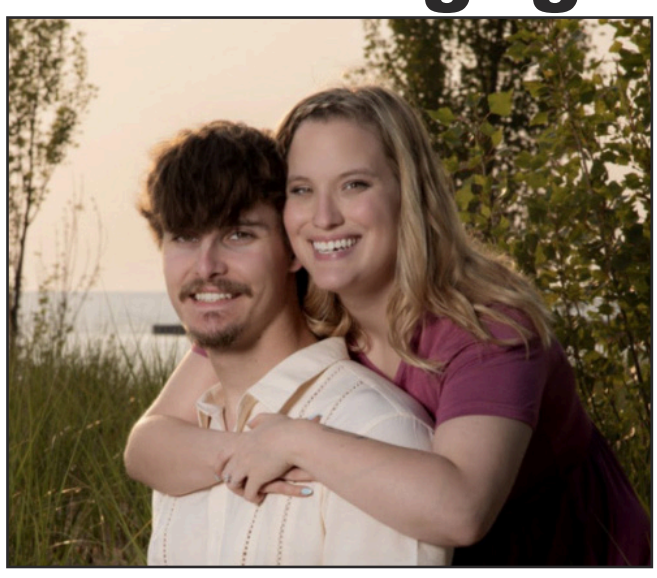
Senator Elizabeth Warren lectured Elon Musk from the back of a limo this week. She is mad that he creates wealth, and his loyal employees have become millionaires.

She wants to create an unconstitutional wealth tax to punish those who create jobs, and at the same time has allowed fraud and waste to the tune of billions of our tax dollars to occur right under her nose!

Nice going, Senator.

Lorraine Root
Paw Paw

Engaged



With hearts full of joy, we are excited to announce the engagement of Jacob Bush and Sadie Imus.

Sadie, daughter of Tom and Kelly Imus of Paw Paw and Jacob, son of Mike and Amy Bush of Allegan, are looking forward to beginning this next chapter together.

The couple will celebrate their love with a September wedding surrounded by family, friends, and the beauty of a vineyard setting.

THE COURIER LEADER
PAW PAW FLASHES
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PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY WILCOX NEWSPAPERS, LLC
PO Box 189, Allegan, MI 49010
(269) 657-3072 • wilcoxnewspapers.com

Publisher - Mike Wilcox
Graphics- Liz LaValle
Reporter - Paul Garrod & James Windell
IT - Jordan Wilcox

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Thursday, June 25 6:30 pm-7:30 pm
ADULTS: Heartbreak Book Club
Love, Naturally by Sophie Sullivan
Thursday, June 25 6:30 pm-7:30 pm
ADULTS: Between the Lines Book Club
Housekeeping by Marilynne Robinson
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OBITUARIES

Charlotte Ann Lugar

Charlotte Ann Lugar, 85, of Lawton, Michigan, passed away peacefully on June 12, 2026, at Rose Arbor Hospice, surrounded by the love of her family.

Born on Aug. 26, 1940, in Paw Paw, Michigan, Charlotte was the daughter of Charles Sanborn and Dorothy Reits. She was raised in Paw Paw and graduated from Paw Paw High School in 1958. She later attended Kalamazoo Practical Nursing Center, Kalamazoo, where she earned her credentials as a Licensed Practical Nurse and she briefly worked for Dr. Robert M. Nicholson and Dr. Gerald W. Powley until her marriage. Her nursing career reflected the compassion, patience, and dedication that defined her life. On August 24, 1963, she married Harold Duane Lugar in Paw Paw, Michigan. Together they shared 38 years of marriage and built a family grounded in love, commitment, and strong values.

Throughout her life, Charlotte enjoyed working and had a number of jobs in the Paw Paw area. During high school, she was employed at the Legendary "Hotel De Hamburger" and the Strand Theater. When raising a family, she assisted in the Lugar Heating family business. After her husband's passing, Charlotte greatly enjoyed working at Taylor's Country Florist and Hill's Prescription Shop.

Charlotte dedicated herself to serving both her family and her community. She was a longtime member of the Paw Paw Lions Club, where she enjoyed participating in and helping organize community Bingo events, and she faithfully volunteered with the LakeView Hospital Women's Auxiliary. Whether through her professional work, volunteer service, or personal relationships, Charlotte was always willing to lend a helping hand and offer support to those in need.

Family was the center of Charlotte's life. She took great pride in being a mother and found her greatest joy in becoming a grandmother. She was a constant source of encouragement and love, rarely missing an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments and milestones of her grandchildren. Whether attending sporting events, graduations, school activities, or family gatherings, Charlotte's presence was unwavering. Her family knew they could always count on her support, guidance, and unconditional love.

Charlotte found happiness in life's simple pleasures. She enjoyed bowling, crocheting, baking, birdwatching, and spending quiet afternoons in her favorite rocking chair. Her homemade cookie and brownie bars became cherished family traditions, eagerly anticipated during holidays and special gatherings. She especially loved watching cardinals visit her yard and took comfort in the beauty of everyday moments. She also enjoyed trips to the casino, trying her luck with Michigan Lottery tickets, and sharing laughter with family and friends.

Her grandchildren will forever cherish memories of afternoons spent crafting, visits to the playground, thrift-shopping adventures, special snack trips, and the countless small acts of kindness that made every moment with Grammy feel special. Charlotte had a remarkable gift for making people feel welcome, valued, and loved. Her warmth, generosity, and gentle spirit touched the lives of everyone fortunate enough to know her.

Charlotte was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Harold Lugar; her father, Charles Sanborn; and her mother, Dorothy Reits.

She is survived by her daughter, Jodie Lugar-McManus (James); her son, Arthur Lugar (Marie); her grandchildren, Ambrosia (Tristen), Darcie, Holly, Caitlin, Nick (Sydney), and Matt; her sisters, Susan Blower (Robert), Betty Jurgensen, Barbara McCarthy, and Patricia Dingman; her brother, Robert Reits Jr (Lori); her great grandchildren Nylah, Caiden, and Lily; and many nieces, nephews, extended family members, and dear friends.

Charlotte will be remembered for her quiet strength, compassionate heart, unwavering devotion to her family, and genuine kindness toward others. Her life was a testament to the value of love, service, and family. The memories she created and the lessons she taught through her example will continue to live on in the hearts of those who knew and loved her.

Visitation will be held at Adams Funeral Home, Paw Paw, on June 24, from noon to 2 p.m. A burial service will follow at Fort Custer National Cemetery, Augusta, Michigan, at 3 p.m.

The family extends its sincere gratitude to the caregivers and staff at Rose Arbor Hospice for the compassion, dignity, and comfort they provided during Charlotte's final days. They would also like to thank Van Buren EMS for their dependable transportation to and from medical appointments, the Area Agency on Aging for the valuable services and support provided throughout the years, and the dedicated staff of White Oaks Assisted Living for the exceptional care, kindness, and friendship they showed Charlotte during the past three years. The love, respect, and attention they gave "Grammy" brought comfort not only to her, but to her entire family.

Charlotte will be deeply missed, lovingly remembered, and forever cherished.

John Edward Frank

John Edward Frank passed away peacefully after a few days in the hospital on June 14, 2026. He will be greatly missed by an enormous family and many friends.

Born to Gustof and Anna Frank on September 29, 1950, John was the youngest of six siblings. He grew up playing kick-the-can and riding bikes with neighbors, relatives, and friends in Coloma, Michigan. When he was in sixth grade, the family moved to nearby Hartford, where he made lifelong friends, worked at Harding's, and volunteered on the fire department.

In his senior year at Hartford High School, John met Joan Field, who traveled from Lawrence to take physics class. They dated throughout college years at Southwestern Michigan College and Michigan State University. Throughout this time, John spent several summers in Alaska building cabinets, hunting, and fishing with his brother.

John and Joan married in 1974 just before joining the Peace Corps, where he planned and set up freshwater fish hatcheries in rural Philippines. Friends there became family and stayed in contact since. After two years of service, the couple traveled to several countries, cementing a lifelong yearning for travel before returning to Michigan.

John found a love for surveying and decided to return to MSU to study civil engineering. He worked with road building in Lenawee County before returning to Van Buren County Road Commission in 1984. He took great pride in his work there until his retirement in 2009.

During this time, John also dove headfirst into family life, raising his children, Katie and Ben, with many road trips and camping adventures. He instilled in his children his passions for seeking new knowledge, craftsmanship, and outdoor adventure. John also delighted in feeding his loved ones, whether that meant making waffles, battling for the check at restaurants, or bringing pans of his famous rolls to holidays. He was beloved by at least a hundred nieces, nephews, and siblings on all sides of his family and Joan's.

Later in retirement, John continued to travel with his family and friends, eventually visiting all 50 states. He especially loved journeying north of the Mackinac Bridge and taking his grandsons, Emmett and Rowan, on road trips to his favorite spots.

Arrangements have been made for Saturday, June 20. Join the family for viewing, visitation, and snacks from 10 a.m. to noon, followed by a memorial service at noon at Adams Funeral Home in Paw Paw, MI.

Memorial contributions in memory of John may be directed to the Van Buren County Youth Camp, 12370 45th St., Bloomingdale, MI, 49026.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at adamspawpaw.com

Clemuel Wright Dobbins

Clemuel Wright Dobbins, II, better known as "Kim", 71, of South Haven, passed away peacefully on Saturday, June 6, 2026 at Caretel Inns of Saint Joseph. He was born February 19, 1955 in Meadville, PA to Clemuel W. Dobbins, I and Patricia (Jackson) Dobbins.

Loved by all who knew him, this guy took hours to cut a small front yard because he stopped and talked to anyone who walked by. He made us all laugh with his unique sense of humor and never passed up an opportunity to brag about his children.

Clemuel will be missed by his life partner, Cindy Moreen; his children, Bryce Dobbins, and Breanne Dobbins; his siblings, Scott Dobbins, and Tracy (Jonathan) Snedeker; and many nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents.

Memorial contributions may be given in Kim's name to the Al-Van Humane Society, www.al-van.org.

Barry Scott Earls

Barry Scott Earls, 60, of Hartford, passed away on June 14, 2026, at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospital in St. Joseph. He was born June 27, 1965, in Paw Paw, Michigan, to Sidney Joseph Earls and Beverly Earls.

Barry graduated from Lawrence High School in 1984, where he enjoyed participating in sports. He dedicated much of his life to serving his community, working for 22 years as sexton for Lawrence Township, 22 years with the Lawrence Fire Department, where he was named Firefighter of the Year in 2012, and 22 years as a school bus driver for Van Buren ISD.

A hardworking and dependable man, Barry was always willing to help others and often put their needs before his own. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, and spending time outdoors. He will be remembered for his kind heart, generous spirit, and the love he shared with his family and friends.

Barry is survived by his wife, Brandi Earls of Hartford; his children, Brittany (Daniel) Holland, Megan Earls, Madisyn Earls, and Buddy (Mya) Earls, all of Hartford; his grandchildren, Marissa, Emma, Luke, Penelope, and Thalia; his parents, Sidney Joseph Earls and Beverly Earls; his brother, Wayne (Connie) Earls; and his niece, Erica (Kenny) Jordan.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Memorial donations can be collected at Lawrence Fire Department.

Lawton Village Council approves 2026-2027 Fiscal Year Budget

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

LAWTON - Lawton Village Manager Todd Hackenberg presented the Village of Lawton 2026-2027 Fiscal Year Budget on Tuesday June 9, at the Lawton Village Council meeting. This is the village's first July 1-June 30 budget. Village Manager Hackenberg said revenues anticipated are $1,722,934, and anticipated expenditures are $1,637,550, leaving a net surplus of $85,384.

Following the public hearing, with no public comment received, the Lawton Village Council approved the FY 26/27 Budget.

Katie Vanderhulst, Market One Community Development Director, presented a summary of the MSHDA Community Development Block Grant Funding for the Village of Lawton Home Rehab Project.

The rehab project would be for homeowner homes only, and not rentals.

Vanderhulst answered several village council questions, including eligibility, how long homeowners would need to remain in the home after the grant is awarded, and how Market One would administrate and help advertise to homeowners and businesses, and how townhalls would be helpful.

A public hearing for the MSHDA Community Development Block Grant was held, with village residents in the audience who expressed support for it.

The Lawton Village Council, following the public hearing, in a unanimous vote, approved the Village of Lawton Home Rehab Project.

The village council also approved payment of $22,465 to the MML Worker's Compensation.

Following an earlier Village of Lawton Zoning Board of Appeals hearing, ZBA members heard a request from A. James Johnson for a fence variance at 523 E. Third St.

Johnson asked the ZBA for permission to build a 6-foot wooden privacy fence around his yard. Since he is on a corner lot, there are two parts of his yard considered front yard, where a wooden privacy fence is not allowed to be that high, as opposed to a normal yard that only has one portion of the yard considered the front yard.

The variance would also allow Johnson a few more feet to be fenced in than is otherwise possible. It will be 16 feet from the road, and 24 feet from the center of the road. Johnson stated this fencing would also help him get his property in accordance with the driveway ordinance as well, and there is no sidewalk, or view encroachment happening. It will also allow for his vehicle to be parked fully off the road.

Village Manager Hackenberg presented the Annual Participation Plan Review memo, highlighting several ways the village reached out to the community in the past year to be in line with the adopted Participation Plan. This is an annual review as a part of the RRC designation.

Village Manager Hackenberg and Trustee Judith Peterson provided an overview of the Village of Lawton Planning Commission's Annual Review and provided an overview.

The Planning Commission met and reviewed this annual review and recommended village council approval it. Following discussion, the Lawton Village Council approved the annual Planning Commission review.

Village Manager Hackenberg said the recent destruction of a button for the Village of Lawton splash pad is on video and has been given to the Lawton Police Department. Hackenberg said the village asks that parents monitor children at the splash pad and follow the newly posted signs.

In other news, the Village has filled the vacant Village of Lawton Department of Public Works position with local, Kevin Cook, filling the position.

Village of Lawton Clerk Brittany Rathbun said Trustees Ryan Tanis, Ren Turner, Eric Dudek, and Char Raber are up for election in the November 2026 election, Raber's will be to fill the remainder of a partial vacant term. She will need to re-run in 2028 as well for a full term if interested.

All paperwork is due back to Antwerp Township Hall no later than July 21, at 4 p.m.

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Juried show at the South Haven Center for the Arts gets personal

By James Windell

So often art may be about objects or scenery. Or it may be a celebration of color and design.

But a new show opening at the South Haven Center for the Arts is more personal and will likely bring out your emotions – particularly if you are a caregiver.

Called simply "Care," the new art exhibition is an unusual, perhaps unique, art exhibition that is about care and caregiving.

According to Kerry Hagy, Executive Director of the South Haven Center for the Arts (SHCA), Care reflects on the impact of caregiving for both those who provide care and those who receive care.

"We put out a call to artists across the country and we got 121 responses," Hagy said in an interview talking about the new show. "Our jury selected 31 pieces from 26 artists all over the country reflecting on giving and receiving care."

As the responses to the invitation started coming in, Hagy was surprised by the art that was submitted.

"I was surprised at how honest people were and how personal their statements were," she said. "Several of the artists were talking about very personal things. For instance, an artist from Wyoming, Michigan, sent a beautiful oil painting of doing her stepdaughter's hair. It's about caring for a stepchild. Another was about caring for a young child with a rare disease. It surprised me how willing people were to share with us such intimate experiences."

Something else unique about this exhibition is that it represents a collaboration between the Arts & Aging Partnership of Southwest Michigan and SHCA. "We started working with them a couple of years ago on a community art project," notes Hagy. "That is the Windows on the World Community Project. But when they told us about their goals and being focused on destigmatizing dementia in our community, I thought of putting together this show about caring."

Together with the Arts & Aging Partnership of Southwest Michigan, the SHCA is exhibiting two shows. One is Windows to the World, a community art project, that will be in the pocket gallery, and Care, which will be in the main gallery.

Tender moments of caregiving are also explored in Window to our World, which will have 30 art pieces made by area care partners (caregivers and receivers) which will be exhibited at the SHCA concurrently with Care.

"When you look at the pieces in both shows, you get a sense of how many people are going through things in their life," Hagy says. "I think this is going to be very meaningful for a lot of people. I'm really excited about the exhibit because it will speaking to people in a personal way."

An opening reception for both exhibitions will be held from 2:00 to 4:00 pm on Saturday, June 20, 2026, at the SHCA, 600 Phoenix Street, South Haven. Complementary refreshments will be provided.

Lawrence Township receives funds from Van Buren District Library Board

Lawrence Township appreciates the commitment that the Van Buren District Library (VBDL) has shown by delivery of a check for $25,000 that was agreed to in the new addendum approved by the Lawrence Township Board on May 21. Lawrence Township looks forward to the Van Buren District Library Board upholding the remaining payments that will be due every year that will assist with maintenance costs of the township-owned building. "This agreement may not be everything that the township had asked for, but it will help defray some of the upcoming maintenance costs to an aging building," said Lawrence Township Board Supervisor, Donna Spenner. She continued, "I hope through the years to come that the VBDL holds true to their commitment of future annual payments so our community can continue to enjoy the benefits of having a library in our community. Thank you to all community members who attended the meetings, spoke, and wrote letters. Also, a thank you to the VBDL board representative for Lawrence on her hard work and commitment to make sure the library remains in our community." Shown in photo, from left, Wendy Estrada, Lawrence Branch Librarian, Anne Cox, VBDL Board representative, Denise Campagna, Lawrence Township Supervisor, Donna Spenner, Linda Weber and Bonita Suter. Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

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=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

Porter Township
88040 M-40 Lawton, MI 49065
Budget Workshop
May 13, 2026
Supervisor Oxley called the Budget Workshop to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Schuitmaker.
Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to adjourn the Budget Workshop at 6:50 pm. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Regular Meeting
May 13, 2026
Supervisor Oxley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Schuitmaker and seven guests.
Motion by Packer with support by Nesbitt to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on April 8, 2026. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Motion by Packer with support by Smith to approve the Treasurer's report subject to audit. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Motion by Nesbitt with support by Bitely to approve the bills as presented. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Motion by Bitely with support by Nesbitt to approve Ordinance 2026-1 Cargo, Shipping and/or Storage Container Usage. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Motion by Nesbitt with support by Bitely to approve a resolution to amend Porter Township Zoning Ordinance Section 4.18 Signs and Outdoor Advertising Structures. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Motion by Nesbitt with support by Packer to Continue the Special Assessment District for the eradication or control of aquatic weeds and plants for Bankson Lake. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Motion by Smith with support by Packer to renew the Township Assessor contract for a two-year term, at a current rate of $3,677.36 per month. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Motion by Packer with support by Bitely for a resolution to approve sewer connection fee payment contract and matters related thereto. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Motion by Packer with support by Bitely to hire Complete Outdoor Services MI LLC to do landscaping work at Township Hall, at a cost not to exceed $1189.84. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Election Commission Meeting will be held Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 5:50 pm.
Budget Public Hearing will be held Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 6:00 pm.
Fire Special Assessment District Public Hearing will be held Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 6:15 pm. Road Special Assessment District Public Hearing will be held Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 6:30 pm.
Bankson Lake Weed Special Assessment District Public Hearing will be held Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 6:45 pm.
Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
Respectfully Submitted,
Heather Smith
Porter Township Clerk

NOTICE TO CREDITORS - LIVING TRUST ESTATE
Trust Estate of: Carroll W. Rimes, Deceased Date of Death: 05-31-2026
Social Security No: XXX-XX-4288
Date of Birth: xx-xx-1927
TO ALL CREDITORS:
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent (and Living Trust Settlor) Carroll W. Rimes, Trustee of the Carroll W. Rimes Living Trust Dated October 27, 1993 who lived at 300 East White Oak Road, Lawton, MI 49065 died May 31, 2026.
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever
barred unless timely presented to Michael A. Rimes of 23287 90th Avenue, Schoolcraft,
MI 49087 and Karen L. Vaickus of 93408 Streeter Drive, Lawton, MI 49065, Successor
Trustees of the Carroll W. Rimes Living Trust within 4 months after the date of
publication of this notice.
Notice is further given that the trust estate will be thereafter assigned and distributed
to the persons entitled to it.
Cordell R. Jones (P15567) Dated: June 12, 2026
JONES LAW OFFICE
120 West Main, Box 187 Michael A. Rimes, Co-Successor Trustee
Marcellus, MI 49067 Address: 23287 90th Avenue
269/646-5511 Schoolcraft, MI 49087
Karen L. Vaickus, Co-Successor Trustee
93408 Streeter Drive
Lawton, MI 49067

STATE OF MICHIGAN
36TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
VAN BUREN COUNTY
ORDER REGARDING ALTERNATE SERVICE
CASE NO. AND JUDGE
26 075634 CK
HON. SUSAN METZGER
Plaintiff's:
CITIZENS UNITED RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE, d/b/a CURE AUTO INSURANCE
Plaintiff's Attorney:
JONATHAN A. VANGEMERT (P71070)
612 W. University Drive, Suite 200
Rochester, MI 48307
Phone: (248) 601-4499
V.
Defendant's:
DYLAN MADISON
602 W. Van Buren St, Apt 5, Gobles, MI 49055

THE COURT FINDS:
Service of process upon the defendant, Dylan Madison
cannot reasonably be made as provided in MCR 2.105 and service of process may be made in a manner that is reasonably calculated to give the defendant actual notice of the proceedings and an opportunity to be heard.
IT IS ORDERED:
2. Service of the summons and complaint other: Jury Demand
and a copy of this order shall be made by the following method(s).
a. First-class mail to 602 W Van Buren St, Apt 5, Gobles, MI 49055
b. Tacking or firmly affixing to the door at 602 W Van Buren St, Apt 5, Gobles, MI 49055
.d. Other. Publication pursuant to MCR 2.106 (D) in Paw Paw Courier Leader Courier Leader.
For each method used, proof of service must be filed promptly with the court.
Judge Signature:
Susan Metzger

Case No. 25-075091-CH CIRCUIT COURT SALE Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. In pursuance and by virtue of a Judgment of the Circuit Court for the County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, made and entered 24th day of April, A.D., 2026 in a certain cause therein pending, wherein Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC was the Plaintiff and Joshua L. Northrup and the United States of America were the Defendants. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I shall sell at public auction to the highest bidder, at public venue, at the Van Buren County Courthouse (that being the place of holding the Circuit Court for said County), on the 6th day of August, A.D., 2026 at 1:00 p.m. o'clock in the afternoon, Eastern Standard Time, the following described property, viz: All certain piece or parcel of land situated in Lawton, County of Van Buren and State of Michigan, described as follows: Lot 5, Block 2 Dodge's Addition to the Village of Lawton, according to the recorded Plat thereof, as recorded in Liber K of Deeds, Page 177, Van Buren County Records, except the South 22 feet wide thereof and except the Easterly 24.65 feet of the North 44 feet thereof. Parcel Identification Number: 80-45-250-019-00 Commonly known as 114 N. Main Street, Lawton, MI 49065 This property may be redeemed during the six (6) months following the sale. Dated: Daniel E. Abbott, VanBuren County Sheriff By: Brian S. Salyer, Deputy Sheriff Katherine E. Iskin (P83598) Sean M. Towner (P82245) Attorneys for Plaintiff MAY OBERFELL LORBER, LLP 4100 Edison Lakes Parkway, Suite 100 Mishawaka, IN 46545 Telephone: (574) 243-4100 kiskin@maylorber.com stowner@maylorber.com
(06-11)(07-23)

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 16, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Chelsey Conkle, a single woman
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC
Date of Mortgage: July 20, 2018
Date of Mortgage Recording: July 26, 2018
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $95,034.83
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Paw Paw, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: The West 109 feet of the South 132 feet of the East 1/2 of the Northwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4, also that part of the West 109 feet of the East 1/2 of the Southwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 lying North of the center of Highway US-12, now known as Red Arrow Highway, all in Section 16, Town 3 South, Range 14 West, according to the Government Survey thereof.
Common street address (if any): 40732 W Red Arrow Hwy, Paw Paw, MI 49079-9317
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: June 11, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1595362
(06-11)(07-02)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: DEREK FANKHAUSER; ATTY: SCHNEIDERMAN&SHERMAN, P.C. - SCHNEIDERMAN & SHERMAN, PC; 1ST PUB: 6/4/2026; ATTY FILE #: 26-001815-1; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 49c of the State Housing Development Authority Act of 1966, 1966 PA 346, MCL 125.1449c, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 02, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Derek Fankhauser and Mary Fankhauser, a husband and wife Original Mortgagee: The Huntington National Bank Date of mortgage: October 24, 2023 Recorded on October 25, 2023, Liber 1758, on Page 577, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Michigan State Housing Development Authority Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Two Hundred Twenty Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty-One and 46/100 Dollars ($220,981.46) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: That part of the Northeast 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 20, Town 4 South, Range 13 West, described as: Beginning at the North 1/4 corner of said Section; thence South 00 degrees 18 minutes 03 seconds East on the 1/4 Section line, 217.69 feet; thence North 89 degrees 23 minutes 33 seconds West parallel with the North Section line 623.98 feet; thence North 00 degrees 11 minutes 20 seconds East parallel with the North-South 1/8 line of the Northwest 1/4 218.45 feet to the North Section line; thence South 89 degrees 23 minutes 33 seconds East on the North Section line 623.57 feet to the Place of Beginning. EXCEPT: Commencing at the North 1/4 corner of Section 20, Town 4 South, Range 13 West, Porter Township, Van Buren County, Michigan; thence North 89 degrees 23 minutes 33 seconds West, 522.27 feet on the North line of said Section 20 to the Place of Beginning; thence continuing North 89 degrees 23 minutes 33 seconds West, 101.00 feet on the North line of said Section 20; thence South 00 degrees 11 minutes 20 seconds East, 657.67 feet; thence South 89 degrees 23 minutes 33 seconds East, 101.00 feet parallel with the North line of said Section 20; thence North 00 degrees 11 minutes 20 seconds West, 657.67 feet to the Place of Beginning. Commonly known as 84056 M 40, Lawton, MI 49065 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 125.1449v, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 125.1449v(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Michigan State Housing Development Authority Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400
1595324
(06-04)(06-25)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Gregory J. Giniel II; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 5/28/2026; Atty File #: 26-004985; Insurer: (unknown)
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty

Continues on page 10

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

BID PROPOSAL

Sealed bids, in triplicate, for the Paw Paw Public Schools – Cedar Street Site Renovation will be received until Tuesday June 30th at 11:00 AM local time at the Paw Paw PS Administration Building 119 Johnson Rd, Paw Paw, MI 49079. Bids received after this time will neither be considered nor accepted.

All proposals received by the time and date stated above will be opened and read publicly at 11:00 AM local time, Tuesday June 30th at the Paw Paw PS Administration Building.

Bids may be mailed to O-A-K's Kalamazoo Office, 2700 Stadium Dr, Suite 2 Kalamazoo, MI 49008. Mailed bids must be received by 4:00 PM June 29th, 2026. FAXED, EMAILED OR UPLOADED TO BUILDING CONNECTED BIDS WILL **NOT** BE ACCEPTED.

In accordance with Section 1267 of the Revised School Code each bid must be accompanied by a sworn and notarized Familial Disclosure Statement completed by the bidder disclosing any familial relationship between the Owner or any employee of the Bidder and any member of the District's Board of Education or the Superintendent of the District.

SITE INSPECTION

A construction pre-bid meeting will be held at Cedar Street Campus 555 Cedar St. Paw Paw, MI 49097 June 16th, 2026 at 9:00 AM local time. All bidders are encouraged to attend.

BID DOCUMENTS

The Bidding Documents may be examined at the following locations:

- Owen-Ames-Kimball Co. Website: *http://www.owen-ames-kimball.com/subcontractors/*
- Builders Exchange plan rooms in Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Lansing and Traverse City.

BIDDER QUALIFICATIONS

Bidders submitting a Bid for this Project shall have qualifications as follows:

a. Shall be a reputable, recognized organization, with at least five (5) years successful experience on work of this type and scope of this project.
b. Shall have a license where required by public authorities having jurisdiction.
c. Shall have ample financial resources for work of this magnitude.

BID SECURITY - PERFORMANCE BONDS

Each bid shall be accompanied by good and sufficient bid security or bid bond in an amount not less than 5% of the Bid amount and shall secure the Owner from loss or damage by reason of the withdrawal of the Bid by a Bidder or by failure of the successful Bidder to enter into a Contract with the Owner if his Bid is accepted by the Owner.

Bid securities will not be released or returned until the bid "hold-firm" date or a subcontract has been successfully executed for the specific bid category of work, whichever occurs first.

Bid security may be provided by furnishing a bond from a surety company having a rating of A- or better or certified check. Owen-Ames-Kimball is not responsible for the loss of bid security if provided by certified check.

The successful Bidder will be required to secure Performance, Labor and Material bonds for all contracts exceeding $50,000, from a surety company having a rating of A- or better, for the full amount of the Contract.

www.owen-ames-kimball.com

TOWNSHIP OF WAVERLY
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Waverly Township Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing concerning Zoning Ordinance text amendments and regular meeting on Monday, July 6, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Waverly Township Hall, 42114 M-43, within the Township. Please take further notice that the matters to be considered at the public hearing include the following:

Proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendments to amend:

Table of contents: label with roman numerals; remove definition Section 10.02-10.24; correct page numbers for additions if effect page numbers

Article 3: add format numbers R1, R2, R3, C, A; remove 3.08 and 3.09, renumber; add day care center in Commercial District; discuss to add duplex to Ag District.

Article 4: change minimum dwelling size from 720 sqft to 600sqft; add language to clarify 24ft "entire length"; Amend 4.06 Temporary dwellings, remove zoning board of appeals as approver, add planning commission as approver.

Section 9: 9.03, remove fine and imprison language

Section 10: definition changes; dictionary, recreational vehicle, setback, front yard

Section 13: 13.02#2 Major Home occupation; add lot width 150ft and lot area no less than 3 acres; remove day care center (add to Commercial); remove bed and breakfast (add to Residential districts as special use); add Bed and Breakfast special use provisions as #15 Bed and Breakfast; clarify samples of major home occupation

General: delete all terms refer to "deleted" or "reserved", renumber; correct typos and misspelled words; remove notations for text amendment before 2018; correct page numbers to continuous page number system;

Any other business that may be brought up at the public hearing

Written documents may be submitted to the Clerk at 42114 M-43 Paw Paw MI 49079 up to the date of the hearing and may also be submitted at the hearing.

Anyone interested in reviewing the related text amendments may examine a copy at the Waverly Township Hall by contacting the Clerk (269-657-1776) clerk@waverlytownship.com or the Zoning Administrator at 1-800-626-5964 mtsallegan@frontier.com during normal business hours.

Necessary and reasonable aids for disabled persons will be made available with sufficient notice to the clerk.

Starr Houston Clerk
42114 M-43,
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-1776

=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

Continues from page 9

has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on JULY 2, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Gregory J. Giniel II, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for OCMBC, Inc., its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated October 17, 2022 and recorded November 1, 2022 in Liber 4812, Page 644 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Brighthouse Life Insurance Company, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Million Two Hundred Sixty-One Thousand Five Hundred Eighty-Three and 1/100 Dollars ($1,261,583.01).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public vendue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on JULY 2, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Township of Casco, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as:
Lot(s) 13, 14, 15 and 16, Block 5, Plat of Beverly Beach, according to the recorded plat thereof, as recorded in Liber 5 of Plats, Page 1.
7258 Beverly Drive, South Haven, Michigan 49090
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. FinCEN reporting will be required of all successful purchasers, absent a lawful exemption.
Dated: May 28, 2026
File No. 26-004985
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(05-28)(06-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: ERIN MAPES; Atty: ROBERTSON ANSCHUTZ SCHNEID CRANE - RAS CRANE & PARTNERS (CC ON FILE); 1st Pub: 5/28/2026; Atty File #: 26-408893; Insurer: (unknown)
ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC, MAY BE DEEMED A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450, Alpharetta, GA 30004 ph:470-321-7112 Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00P.M on June 25, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): ERIN MAPES. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by ERIN MAPES to CHEMICAL BANK, original Mortgagee, for a mortgage dated June 28, 2007, and recorded on July 06, 2007, in Liber 1486 Page 193 in the Van Buren County Register of Deeds. Said mortgage was assigned through mesne assignments to U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCAF ACQUISITION TRUST, as documented by an assignment dated February 18, 2026, and recorded on April 6, 2026, in Liber 1790 Page 928 in the VAN BUREN County Register of Deeds, on which Mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $59,960.17. Under the power of sale contained in said Mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue, at the place of holding the Circuit Court within VAN BUREN County, Michigan on June 25, 2026 at 1:00 P.M. Said premises are located in the city of PAW PAW in VAN BUREN County, Michigan and are described as: THE NORTH HALF OF LOT 11, BLOCK 26, ORIGINAL PLAT OF THE VILLAGE OF PAW PAW, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTER OF DEEDS FOR VAN BUREN COUNTY. Property Address: 320 E BERRIEN STREET, PAW PAW, MI 49079 Tax ID No. 80-47-126-011-00 The redemption period shall be Six (6) months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If this property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the Mortgage sale or to the Mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY BUT SOLELY AS OWNER TRUSTEE FOR RCAF ACQUISITION TRUST, Mortgagee/Assignee May 28, 2026 ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC Attorney for Mortgagee/Assignee 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450 Alpharetta, GA 30004 Telephone: 470-321-7112 Facsimile: 404-393-1425 Service Email: MIFCLTeam@raslg.com
(05-28)(06-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Chad Bedwell; Atty: Potestivo & Associates - Potestivo & Associates; 1st Pub: 5/28/2026; Atty File #: 322076; Insurer: FNMA
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on June 25, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Chad Bedwell, Surviving Spouse Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Green Lending, its successors and assigns Foreclosing Assignee: PHH Asset Services, LLC Date of Mortgage: July 31, 2025 Date of Mortgage Recording: August 6, 2025 Amount claimed due on mortgage on the date of notice: $155,709.79 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in the City of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: LOT 16 OF PARASCANDOLO ADDITION NO. 1, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN LIBER 5 OF PLATS, ON PAGE 16, VAN BUREN COUNTY RECORDS. Commonly Known as: 117 Paras Hill Dr., Hartford, MI 49057 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or upon the expiration of the notice required by MCL 600.3241a(c), whichever is later; or unless MCL 600.3240(16) applies. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention Purchaser: This sale may be rescinded by the foreclosing mortgagee for any reason. In that event, your damages, if any, shall be limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest, and the purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, or the Mortgagee's attorney. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. This notice is from a debt collector. Date of notice: 05/28/2026 Potestivo & Associates, P.C. 251 Diversion Street, Rochester, MI 48307 248-853-4400 322076
(05-28)(06-18)

VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
Zoning Board of Appeals
NOTICE OF MEETING CANCELLATION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the meeting of the Village of Mattawan Zoning Board of Appeals and public hearing scheduled on June 22, 2026, at 7:00 PM has been canceled.

The applicant has withdrawn the application that was scheduled for consideration, and there is no other business requiring action by the Board.

This notice is posted in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Jolie Storm-Artis
Village Clerk
June 12, 2026

CLASSIFIEDS

• HELP WANTED •

LIVE-IN KENNEL HELP WANTED and lawn work, free rent, call for information, physically fit male, 269-400-0516

• WANTED •

WE BUY OLD BASEBALL CARDS, OTHER SPORTS MEMORABILIA AND OLD VINTAGE COINS. CAN BE REACHED AT 517-416-1629. WE PAY CASH.

CLARK'S AUTO PARTS, INC. is buying cars, trucks & all metals for recycling. Lawrence, 674-4905 or 1-800-707-8650.

STANDING TIMBER. Top Michigan lumber manufacturer seeking landowners with 25 or more mature hardwood trees to sell. Qualityhardwoodsinc.com • 517-566-8061.

• SERVICES •

TIM'S STUMP GRINDING SERVICE- I believe in respectable service. 269-299-5052, 269-624-6884.

HAULING, CLEANING RECYCLING. Moving service. Right Quick Hauling. Dan Wydick, Dustin Wydick, Daniel Wydick, 423-8545. Serving since 1994.

FIELD PLUMBING & HEATING, INC. Services all brands of heating & cooling equipment in your home or business. 24/7 service for over 50 years, 269-674-3839.

BUYING JUNK CARS, trucks, scrap metal and farm machinery. Kalamazoo Metal Recyclers, 1525 King Highway, Kalamazoo. 269-381-1315.

CALL A PRO HANDYMAN SERVING LAWRENCE AND SURROUNDING AREAS 269-903-6397.

PERRY'S PERFECT PITCH PIANO TUNING Homes-Churches-Schools, Call 269-999-4440.

• FOR SALE •

HOME FOR SALE 1984 VICTORIAN MANUFACTURED HOME. 2 Bd, 2bth, 2 outdoor porches, 10'x12' 3 season room. All appliances and some furniture included. New flooring throughout, new window coverings, new interior paint throughout, 2 new toilets, generally good condition. Royal Estates Mobile Home Park 6253 Overdale Manor Rd., Kalamazoo, MI Asking price- $55,000 Please call: 925-775-8315

2017 FORD ESCAPE, TITANIUM W/ ECOBOOST/AWD 90,300 mi, Grey, all 4 new tires. Asking $13,990 Call Steve at 925-775-8315

5TH WHEEL RV TRAILER, 2011, 28 ft Coachman, good condition, non smoker, no pets, $4000 or best offer, 269-427-8846.

• FOR RENT •

FOR RENT- HAYFIELD, Glendale area, 269-568-1201.

• AUCTION •

ALL SECURE SELF STORAGE will hold sale of abandoned property at a public sale pursuant in 540.521-570.527: Public Auction: 6/30/2026 at or after 9:30a.m. EST: 37404 W Red Arrow Highway Paw Paw: Myrtle Roberts, 5; Lacey Jackson, 50; Jedaiah Merchant, 51; Brooke Collins, 90/109; Rachel Fonger, 214.

• SALES •

AUTUMN VINEYARDS NEIGHBORHOOD YARD SALE Autumn Vineyards (located in Paw Paw) community yard sale June 18-20th 9AM to 4 PM

BELLWARE NEIGHBORHOOD GARAGE SALE June 27, 2026 8AM-3PM Over 15 Homes participating! Bellware Blvd., Klett Rd., Margurite Ln., Riverview Dr. Household Items, Tools, Toys, Furniture & More! Bring your truck!!!

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(269) 998-6977

MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

FOR TIERED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS
Date of Publication: On or about June 18, 2026
Village of Lawrence
157 N Paw Paw St
Lawrence, MI 49065

On or about June 30, 2026, the Village of Lawrence will request the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to release Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended.
Program funds will be used to undertake a project known as The Village of Lawrence CDBG HIP for the purpose of homeowner rehabilitation to approximately 20 homes within the limits of the Village of Lawrence. The total estimated project cost is $400,000.

The activities proposed are categorically excluded under HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58 from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.

The Tier I Review covers the geographic area defined as: The Village of Lawrence. The Tier I broad assessment of the project area revealed no serious environmental adverse impacts for the following Section 58.5 compliance factors: Airport Hazards, Coastal Barrier Resources Act, Clean Air Act, Coastal Zone Management, Endangered Species, Explosive and Flammable Operations, Farmlands Protection, Wetland Protection, Sole Source Aquifers, and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Tier II site-specific environmental analyses will be conducted as project sites are identified and will include the following factors: Flood Insurance, Contamination and Toxic Substances, Floodplain Management, Historic Preservation (SHPO), Noise Abatement and Control).

Upon completion of the Tier I Review, The Village of Lawrence will publish or post the review for public comment. Following the public comment period, the Request for Release of Funds and Certification will be forwarded to the Michigan State Housing Development Authority.

An Environmental Review Record (ERR) that documents the environmental determinations for this project is on file at Lawrence Village Hall, 157 N Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064.
The record is available for review and may be examined or copied weekdays during open hours: Monday-Thursday 9 AM-12 PM & 1-4 PM and Friday 9 AM-12 PM

PUBLIC COMMENTS
Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments regarding the ERR. All comments should be mailed to:
Lawrence Village Hall
ATTN: CDBG HIP
157 N Paw Paw St.
Lawrence, MI 49064
All comments received by **June 11, 2026, by 4:30 PM Eastern Time** will be considered prior to requesting a release of funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION
The Village of Lawrence certifies to MSHDA that Amy Cordes, in her capacity as the Lawrence Village Manager, consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. MSHDA's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities and allows the Village of Lawrence to use HUD Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS
MSHDA will accept objections to its release of funds and the Grantee's certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the Grantee; (b) the Certifying Officer has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process has committed funds or incurred costs not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by MSHDA; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality.
Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76) and can be sent via email to mshda-cdbg@michigan.gov or through the mail, addressed to MSHDA - CDBG, 735 East Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 48912. Potential objectors should contact MSHDA to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Amy Cordes, Certifying Officer, Village of Lawrence

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON INCREASING PROPERTY TAXES

The Board of Trustees of Almena Township will hold a public hearing on a proposed increase of 0.1050 mills in the operating tax millage rate to be levied on property in year 2026.

The hearing will be held on Wednesday, June 17, 2026 at 6:30 pm at the Almena Township Hall, 27625 CR 375 Paw Paw.

The date and location of the meeting to take action on the proposed additional millage will be announced at this meeting.

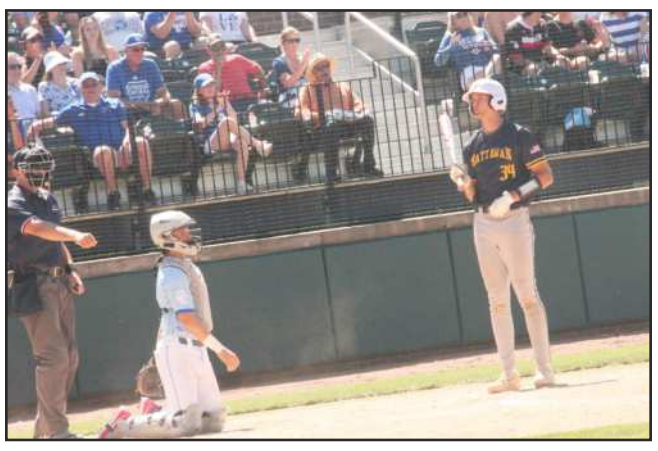
If adopted, the proposed additional millage will increase operating revenues from ad valorem property taxes 2.69% over such revenues generated by levies permitted without holding a hearing. If the proposed additional millage is not approved, the operating revenue will increase by 1.37% over the preceding year's operating revenue.

The taxing unit publishing this notice, and identified below, has complete authority to establish the number of mills to be levied from within its authorized millage rate.

This notice is published by:

Almena Township
27625 CR 375
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-668-6910

Mattawan's baseball season ends in state semifinals



First baseman Ethan Bouma (34) of Mattawan had a hit against Catholic Central.

Mattawan players and coaches watch the semifinal game from their Michigan State University baseball field dugout on Friday.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

EAST LANSING — An outstanding season for Mattawan's baseball season came to an end on June 12 in the Division 1 state semifinals with a 6-1 setback at Michigan State University to Detroit Catholic Central.

Catholic Central beat Rochester Adams in the championship game on Saturday 7-0.

Mattawan ended its season with a 32-10-2 record.

Catholic Central scored in the second inning against Mattawan on a wild pitch. But DCC exploded for five runs in the fifth. Kyle Davis, Dylan Fairchild and Nick Garnick had RBI singles in that inning while Luke Fairchild had an RBI double.

Kaden Hominy was the starting and losing pitcher for the Wildcats. He gave up five hits and three runs, two earned, over four innings.

The Wildcats had a tough time trying to figure out Catholic Central starter Andrew Mahoney who gave up three hits and one run over seven innings, striking out 15 and walking three;

Max Vanantwerp, Ethan Bouma and Jack Reiter all had one hit for Mattawan.

Luke Fairchild had two hits and two RBIs to lead CC, which did not commit a single error.

"We were prepared all week for Andrew Mahoney and we just couldn't hit him," Mattawan coach Brett Vaughn said. "He was throwing really well today. You're not going to win a whole lot of games when you strike out 15 out of 21 outs. We thought we were prepared coming in for him. We just struggled at the plate. There's nothing we could do about it."

But Mattawan baseball fans enjoyed quite a season.

"Our goal in the winter time was to make it to (Michigan State)," Vaughn said. "We did accomplish that goal. But we didn't finish what we set to accomplish which was to win a state championship.

"But again, I can't say anything bad about it. Catholic Central showed up today and they hit the ball hard, and their pitching was amazing."

Paw Paw athlete looks back at grid career

Connor Hindenach was a standout football player at Paw Paw.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Connor Hindenach won't be playing football this fall after a successful career at Paw Paw and Michigan Tech.

Zoe played his final season last fall at MTU.

At Paw Paw, he played defensive line, linebacker and fullback. He played both way as a senior and somewhat as a junior.

Fullback or defensive line was his strength.

Hindenach did not play fullback in college but did with Red Wolves.

As a Michigan Tech senior, he played in 11 games and had 21 solo tackles. He played four years at nose tackle. He started most games over the last four seasons. He started every game last season.

In his final year of college football, "we finished 7-4 and had some good wins. We're probably a game or two out of the playoffs. It was one of the better seasons we've probably had," Hindenach said.

"I think I improved every year. This was definitely the peak of my career, especially my senior year. My knowledge of the game and a lot of fundamentals (were improvements). My best game I would say is when we played at Davenport (in Grand Rapids) in October. I had a sack and some tackles for losses, we held one of the best running backs in the league to 20 yards rushing. I think I accomplished everything I wanted to. I walked away with two degrees and met a lot of great people."

His other accomplishments at Tech:

2024: GLIAC Academic Excellence Team… Appeared in eight games for the Huskies making six starts… Recorded 13 total tackles (nine solo four assisted)... Recorded two sacks for four yards…

2023: Academic All-GLIAC… Played and started in seven games… Finished 15th on the team with 11 total tackles (seven solo four assisted)... Recorded a game-high four total tackles at Wis.-Platteville on Sept. 16…

2022: GLIAC All-Academic Team... Appeared in 10 games for the Huskies... Posted 26.0 tackles, including 16 solo tackles with 4.5 tackles for loss... Recovered one fumble... Posted 1.0 sack...

2021: Redshirted...

High School: Set a school record with 32 career tackles for loss at Paw Paw High School…Named all-state honorable mention in 2019… All-conference first team on two occasions…Member Kalamazoo dream team in 2019 and 2020…Earned all-region honors in 2020… Member of National Honors Society…2020 team captain and defensive most valuable player…Assisted team to 2019 District Championship…High school TFL record holder..

He was in basketball, track, wrestling and power lifting at Paw Paw.

He was majoring in Electrical Engineering at Tech and was getting a master's in business education. He said he will be a project engineer at a paper mill in Manistee.

Jominey reflects on Mattawan's season

Kaden Jominey was playing in his second state semifinal game.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

Kaden Jominey was hoping for a Mattawan victory over Detroit Catholic Central on Friday in the state semifinals.

It didn't quite happen as he took the pitching loss in a 6-1 setback.

"It was tough," he said after the game. "We battled through it. We kept it close for three or four innings. Their pitcher kept us off our game. I was alit too wild once mound, we made mistakes and we had to pay for it.

"We were super confident coming in. We prepared for him all week. We felt if we could get keep runners on first and second early and bunt them over and maybe get a squeeze. We knew it would be a low scoring game. We wanted to score two or three. "

A 2-1 regional semifinal win over Lowell probably ranks as the top highlight for Jominey.

Jack Reiter doubled, scoring two runs in the bottom of the eighth in that game.

Jominey was also in the state semifinals in his freshman year.

But this season, "it was great, we were soaking it all in," he said. 'I wanted it to go differently this time. I love my teammates and we had a good ride."

Jominey will now be going to Cornell to play baseball."

McNair had huge senior season for South Haven track

By John Raffel
Correspondent

Trevor Smiley is South Haven's track and field coach and was very happy with what his senior Jacie McNair accomplished.

"Jacie presented a focused genuine approach and dedication to practicing and performing at his best daily," Smiley said. "Jacie offered a steady upbeat presence for our team as well as others; so much so that he became known for "vibing" with other teams. Jacie is a committed learner of his craft and became the bellcow for the South Haven.

"Jacie earned 73 points for the team this season. The next most was 26. Jacie earned 1st place in conference meets against Saugatuck, Black River, Gobles, Fennville, Bredgman and Allegan as well at the Portage Northern Huskie Invite and the SJ/BH Rotary invitational."

McNair also earned a third-place finish at the Comstock Invitational.

"Jacie along with his throwing teammates (Carson Dissette, Colt Olney and Ty Blunt) brought home a 2nd place finish in the BIG MAN 4x100 at the PN Huskie Invite," Smiley said. "Jacie earned all-conference honors. He plans to attend Kellogg Community College and pursue a career in HVAC."

Anderson leads Bangor girls track

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR —Bangor's girls track team scored 31 points in the regional meet this past season and was led by Lauryn Anderson who was first in the shot put (110-03) and fourth in the shot put (28-04.50.

In the discus for the season, Anderson wound up 16th at the state meet with a toss of 106 feet, 8 inches.

But in all of her other meets, the Bangor senior was first or second.

She was first at the Benton Harbor Invitational (101-10) first at the Bridgman Invitational (10-5-10), first at the Comstock Invitational (110-40 and also first at the Lowell Arrow Invitational (100-2), SW 10 meet at Centreville (98-4) and at the Bangor Invitational (105-4).

Her season's best was 110-9 at the Comstock Invitational.

Anderson was first at the regional in Bangor at 110-3.

Bloomingdale's track sparked by Odell, Cleto

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINGDALE — Bloomingdale's boys track team scored 41 points in the Southwest 10 Conference meet.

Key performer for Bloomingdale including James Odell who was third on the conference pole vault with 10 feet 6 inches, and Christopher Cleto who was fifth in the long jump at 17-03.25.

Odell started out the season with a pair of second places, with 10-6 at the Comstock Invitational and 10-0 in the first SW 10 meet.

He had a personal best of 11-0 and had his only first place of the season. The was fourth at 10-6 in the Bangor Invitational and was second in 10-6 at another SW meet at Bloomingdale. He continued with 10-6 in the final four meets of the season including at Gobles, Comstock, and Bangor for the regionals.

Cleto's effort in the conference meet was his personal best/ It was also his best place finish of the season.

Paw Paw golfers take 16th

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Paw Paw's boys got team ended its 2026 season in Division 2 regional action recently at Coldwater Golf Course.

Paw Paw finished 16th in the tournament with a 350. St Joseph won it with 312, followed Gull Lake 313, Marshall 317, Jackson 323, Niles 323, Goldwater 324 and Edwardsburg and Harper Creek tied for ninth at 325.

For Paw Paw, Aydn Roth was 27th place with an 81, Grant Sholander 46th at 84, Anderson Farnquist 62nd at 87, Ezekiel Gonzalez 88th at 98 and Patrick Marks 94th at 84.

Paw Paw played in the Wolverine Conference championship on May 20 at Pineview Golf Course.

Paw Paw took sixth place with a 354. Vicksburg won first at 311, followed by Plainwell 321, Edwardsburg third 323, Otsego fourth 331, Sturgis with 344 and Paw Paw sixth 354. Roth led Paw Paw with an 81 for 14th place, followed by Sholander with 89 for 26th, Marks wirth a 90 for 29th, Farnquist 40th with a 94 and Gonzalez 43rd with a 99.

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MCS – Tennis, Field Events & Berm
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AVB-26-515

BID ANNOUNCEMENT

AVB Construction, LLC is preparing to construct a new Tennis facility, field events and berm.
Commencement of work will be:
July 14, 2026 – October 29, 2026

AVB is performing multiple projects at Mattawan Consolidated Schools over the next 2 years.

Bid Information

Bid Information is available now:

Contact Amanda Lafler for access to bidders' instructions, plans and specifications:
alafler@avbinc.com 269-816-4418

All bidders must supply a bid bond, a notarized statement of familial relationship & other required affidavits found on the district website

There will be NO pre-bid walk through.

Bids are due:
Tuesday, June 30 at 3:00 PM EST at the Mattawan Consolidated Schools Central Office - 56720 Murray St. Mattawan, MI 49071 (ATTN Pam Stermer, CFO)

There will be a sealed public bid opening immediately following. Late bids will not be considered.

Project Location, Schedule

Mattawan Consolidated Schools
56720 Murray Street, Mattawan, MI 49071

Tennis, Field Events & Berm:
July 14, 2026 – October 29, 2026

Scopes of Work Bidding

Scopes of Work Include:

26.100 Electrical, 31.100 Sitework, 32.120 Asphalt, 32.130 Concrete, 32.180 Sports Surfacing, 32.185 Synthetic Turf, 32.310 Fences & Gates.

avb BUILD SOMETHING BETTER.

MCS – Middle School Additions & Renovations
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AVB-26-507

BID ANNOUNCEMENT

AVB Construction, LLC is preparing to construct an addition as well as some renovations to the Mattawan Middle School. Commencement of work will be:
August 31, 2026 – March 31, 2028

AVB is performing multiple projects at Mattawan Consolidated Schools over the next 2 years.

Bid Information

Bid Information is available now:

Contact Amanda Lafler for access to bidders' instructions, plans and specifications:
alafler@avbinc.com 269-816-4418

All bidders must supply a bid bond, a notarized statement of familial relationship & other required affidavits found on the district website

A non-mandatory pre-bid walk is scheduled for Monday, June 22, 2026 at 1:00 pm at the Mattawan Middle School.

Bids are due:
Friday, July 10 at 1:00 PM EST at the Mattawan Consolidated Schools Central Office - 56720 Murray St. Mattawan, MI 49071 (ATTN Pam Stermer, CFO)

There will be a sealed public bid opening immediately following. Late bids will not be considered.

Project Location, Schedule

Mattawan Consolidated Schools
56720 Murray Street, Mattawan, MI 49071

MCS Middle School Additions & Renovations:
August 31, 2026 – March 31, 2028

Scopes of Work Bidding

Scopes of Work Include:

02.400 Selective Demolition; 03.100 Concrete; 04.200 Masonry; 05.100 Structural Steel & Misc Metals; 06.800 General Trades; 07.460 Metal Panels; 07.530 Membrane Roofing; 08.340 OH Doors; 08.400 Aluminum, Glass Glazing; 09.910 Paint; 09.250 Studs, Insulation, Drywall, Ceilings; 09.600 General Flooring; 11.400 Kitchen Equipment; 21.100 Fire Protection; 22.100 Plumbing; 23.100 Mechanical; 26.100 Electrical; 27.100 Technology; 31.100 Sitework; 32.120 Asphalt & Paving; 32.310 Fences & Gates; 32.900 Landscaping

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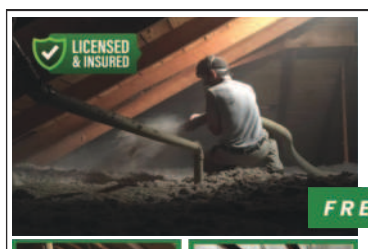

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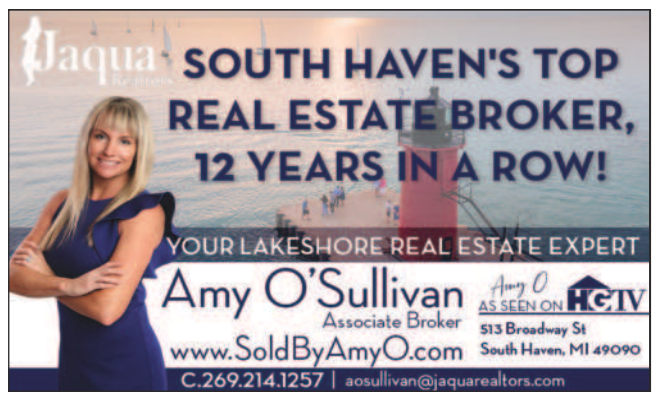

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